Christmas and New Year

BING

1980

Edited by REG BRISTO

The International Crosby Circle

No.58

Wishing You
All the Luck
in the World—

BEST
WISHES
FOR A
BRIGHT
WHITE CHRISTMAS
& A PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR

BING: Official Organ of THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

No. 58
Christmas, 1980

Secretary & Editor:
REG BRISTO,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN, GWENT, NP44 4PJ

Annual Subscription £2.50 (£2 to retired members) U.K.
European members equivalent to £3.00 sterling; Australian ditto, BUT £4.00 for airmail posting.
American/Canadian 8 dollars, OR 12 dollars for airmail posting.

BING is dedicated to the imperishable memory of a great man and an entertainer beyond compare.

Tape & Disc Consultants:
BERT BISHOP, 'Tideway', Imperial Av. Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex.
JOHN BASSETT, 'Bingville' 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex.

Film Consultants:
FRED REYNOLDS, 69 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RQ
KEITH PARKINSON, 16 Cartwell Rd. St. Annes, Lytham St. Annes, FY8 1DF

Chief Publicist: LESLIE GAYLOR, 114 Medina Av. Newport, ISLE OF WIGHT
(General interest letters to the Editor; queries/news to the consultants specified please).

HEIGHO: ITS CHRISTMAS TIME - A TIME TO BE JOLLY....its been a long wait for BING. We hope the wait is justified....

Gay and merry was the time, and gay and merry were numerous hearts with Christmas close at hand. The hearts to which Christmas brings a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families, whose members have been dispersed and scattered far and wide, in the restless struggles of life, are then reunited, and meet once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual goodwill, which is a source of such pure and unalloyed delight, and one so incompatible with the cares of the world....Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; that can transport the sailor and the traveller, thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home! And the lustrous, friendly, warm voice of the estimable Mr. Crosby ever-present to ensure that with that voice, no-one can be truly alone at this most happy of holidays.....

(Acknowledgements and apologies to THE PICKWICK PAPERS and Mr. Charles Dickens)

SEPT. 27th 1981: SEPT 27th 1981: Sept 27th 1981: if you can make long-range appointsments, THAT Is the date of next year's Leeds event!

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS:

	Page
Editorial..	6
Leeds Deeds	7
BING! Went the strings of our Hearts	12
White Christmas by Keith Parkinson	17
An Abiding Presence..	21
The Way you feel about Bing: Karen Wesley. ..	23
Letters..	25
In Memoriam..	33
A Christmas Crosby Quiz....	36
Trading Post.	37
Bing remembers Christmasses of long ago	40
How the voice changed by John Bignell..	41
Keeping Track by Bert Bishop..	45

but lots more !

ORIGINAL MATERIAL © 1980! Make it a time to be jolly...

Editorial

HAPPY HOLIDAY! HAPPY HOLIDAY! While the merry bells keep ringing....its Christmas time again. Yes, already. Christmas time is Crosby time....it always was. As far back as when we used to drop heavy hints that all we wanted for Christmas was a precious Bing 78 at the enormous cost of 2/6d. (12½p today....but, that was yesterday...where have they all GONE?). Yes, that's all we wanted and to Hades with the two front teeth! Now we wonder if its any use dropping even heavier hints about, say, a video-recorder? Which illustrates the way things have changed.
But Bing hasn't, and never will, change. He will be there to 'make' the Yuletide.

Yet will there be a hint of desperation about THIS Christmas? Does it uneasily smack of "eat, drink and be merry...for next week we may be redundant?" Will we, equally uneasily, remember Bing singing BUDDY CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? In passing, we think Bing sang this only because it was a song of the times, not so much a protest, tho' goodness knows, a protest was needed.

However, away with dull cares (to quote someone wiser than us) and let's at least enjoy a right, royal, Bing Christmas.

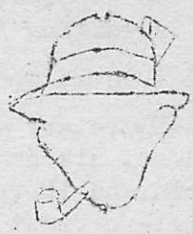
And while it may be against the popular emotion, we have one desperate wish: we'll take all the jolly holly, all the ivy, all the carols, cards with perky robins, Yuletide logs but no, NO, White Christmas. Except in song! Skating has definitely palled...selfish, no doubt!

MAY YOUR EVERY WISH COME TRUE !

LEEDS DEEDS

THE ANNUAL EVENT IN YORKS

Special report by the Editor - BUT, with an important difference. Where his own small part in the proceedings is touched upon, use has been made of letters received by him following the event. This solves a little problem in quite convenient style!



Sunday, 28th September last, started most unpromisingly; dull and wet and certainly looking as if the policy of bringing the date of the annual dinner forward in order to avoid the likely dismal days - not to mention the foggy ones - of October, was to be negatived. Happily, around noon the sun burst forth in brilliant fashion and Roundhay Park, Leeds, in which the Mansion House is situated, presented a brilliant scene more in keeping with summer than late Autumn. The flower-beds facing the house were, surprisingly, in full bloom and presented a real blaze of colour. In fact, if other more important deeds were not about to be perpetrated verily one might have got sunburned! Which, for those who visit Leeds only for the annual dinners, would have been a novelty indeed.

Thus, the scene was set and it was this lovely scene that greeted a record number of guests who converged on this West Yorkshire city from, it seems, all quarters of Britain to share at least this one day with kindred spirits in the wonderful world of Crosbyana.

Shortly after 3 pm Michael Crampton, our now-traditional host, opened the proceedings in his usual brisk, incisive manner. After first warmly welcoming the assembled members, he outlined why it was apt to call this the 30th Anniversary dinner - and the fifteenth he personally had originated and organised.

> 1950 is the year from which a cogent pattern can be traced in a Crosby club in Britain. True, such clubs existed here since the 'Thirties but it is from 1950 that an unbroken, clearly discernible, pattern can be easily traced. And Michael referred to some of the 'modern day' founders of whom perhaps only Ralph Harding was present. And it was good to see him looking as expansive and well as ever despite some rather disquieting news we had received earlier about him! May he long continue to look as well.

TAPED GREETINGS:

Michael then proceed to play through tapes which had been received. One of them was from the Bing Crosby Historical Society in the States and featured warmest greetings and congratulations from Ken Twiss and other members there.

Ken Barnes, unavoidably absent because of a prior commitment, send one of his unique tapes, first of greetings and thence of one of those bantering off-the-floor tapes featuring Bing in chit-chat with both Ken and Pete Moore - "For Chrissakes, I don't

KNOW the song!" and so on, ending with a first-heard recording of Bing singing WHEN THE RED, RED, ROBIN COMES BOBBIN' ALONG - one of the unissued (so far) tracks from the Buddy Cole repertoire as 'reconditioned' by Ken and Pete, and now, of course, totally unrecognisable from the original effort. Sounded great.

> Michael next proceeded to introduce yours truly with some much-appreciated remark about 'holding everything together by editing BING, etc. etc.' Much appreciated by me, that is!

And this is where I fall back on authentic quotes from letters:

The Secretary - or Editor! - although looking surprisingly well, indeed, his dapper self, was clearly NOT himself. For those who could see there was the well-concealed limp, not to mention the built-up right shoe....and it must be said, his usual fluent coherency, evidenced on previous occasions, was curiously lacking. All understandable, of course, from a virtual 20-month seclusion (it is understood this was his first trip away from home in that time and a lengthy trip it was, too) and there is no doubt the pleasure of seeing him again atoned for any lack of off-the-cuff comments that are normally expecfed from him..."

Well, I have no quarrel with that; I did find my return to the scene a little overpowering, even a little emotional. However, I remember making a point of, at last, being able to thank in person all the members for being so kind to me during that period of injury; and here I took advantage to quote the piece (scheduled only then) from this issue of BING, made by Stan Austin, about the friendships forged, simply because 50-odd years ago, Bing liked to sing! I also made mention of the fact, significant, I felt, that here, three years after Bing's lamented passing, we had a record attendance for the current event.

I remember making mention of two 2-year-olds who had more than a passing acquaintance with Bing Crosby - my grandson, and Michael Crampton's son! It was, I recall saying, quite a touching experience to hear a pipirg, innocent, little voice singing: "Make sure that your umbrella is upside down..." or "He will guard me from harm....." - as in Brahms Lullaby, sung of course, by Bing.

Which brings another quote: "Your comments on the youngsters was enjoyed; but I felt that what you were really implying was that, if we all could hang on long enough here, with your grandson, and Michael's son, we had prospective party-organisers and Editors for the future!"

To which I can only say: Precisely!

TABLE MATS...& BROCHURES:

A well-appreciated feature of this year's dinner was the provision of a handsome brochure commemorating 30 years existence, and some truly ornamental table-mats. The brochure had a cover of unpublished pictures of Bing taken at the same time as the picture for the SEASONS album was taken, and with gold-lettering on white made a most attractive booklet. It contained articles by Ken Crossland ("A CELEBRATION OF 15 YEARS OF BING IN LEEDS"); a joint message from Al Sutton, (the late) Herb Bootman and Morton B. Miller from the States; Michael Crampton with a tribute to Mick Drury who, until his sad death on December 9, 1977 had played such a fine "behind-the-scenes" part in Leeds events. It also included a typically erudite piece by Fred Reynolds entitled "THIRTY YEARS ON". It is possible this is reprinted in this issue. And, a small piece on the current scene, by yours truly.

It was a pleasure, next, for me to introduce JOHN JOYCE of Gateshead to the assembly. John happens to be in a position to give us considerable assistance with printing matters - the brochure and decorative menu were his fine efforts - and he undertakes these generous projects with real enthusiasm. We owe him a big debt.

John took the opportunity to talk about his new publication of the discography and the A to Z of Bing in hard-back 'professional' form; and to express his pleasure at being able to launch these much-needed publications in the cause of perpetuating the Crosby memory.

AND SO TO DINNER -

As mentioned, there was a decorative card for the menu. Main item was English roast lamb and all that normally goes with it; yours truly, even going without the fish-cutlet dish was more than full at the finish. Once again, the staff at the Mansion did a fine job - slickly, and with everything piping hot. Its nice to know that they can cater for up to 160 for dinner so that means we can continue to expand without shifting venue! Just over a 100 sat down to the meal on this occasion. Anything larger would, however, mean considerable effort in clearing the way for subsequent items on the programme after dinner.

***

Another of the quiz-questions was: Which British singer came close to joining the Andrews Sisters in the early 50's? And a wag called out: "LARRY GRAYSON!" Not the right answer, though!

So we came to the feature that never palls - films, for it would be unthinkable at this Leeds event, or for that matter, any Crosby event, not to see and hear Bing on the screen. This time we enjoyed edited versions of BLUE SKIES and PENNIES FROM HEAVEN - and what a sobering thought it was for some of us that the younger people there had never seen PENNIES - for it seems it has not been seen on TV here. And they were not on the scene when it first came out.

But finally we came to - the MACK SENNETT 'shorts' - those hastily-cheaply-made little films that have become so historic. Made at a time when Bing must have wondered just how his career was going to proceed; he'd left Paul Whiteman, was under a 'union' cloud with his two Rhythm Boy colleagues and really seemed at a standstill. He was, no doubt, only too eager to snap up Mack Sennett's offer of 750 dollars to make these 'featurettes' - and neither he, Mack Sennett or anyone else (unless it was brother Everett) had any idea of what was just around the corner.

It was noticeable, once more, at Leeds that a profound hush falls on the audience when these films are shewn. To see the young, bouncing, open-faced Crosby singing AUF WIEDERSEHEN MY DEAR, in evening-dress, singing in a night-club but with, obviously, a radio microphone (early days type!) is, for your Editor at least and no doubt many others, a very moving experience. This occurs, of course, in WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT where that so familiar song got its first screen performance of all..... and the police patrolman who chuckles and says "It's him all right!" as Bing goes into the famous whistling passage.....

Then that lovely song we can hear ONLY on this soundtrack - EVERY TIME MY HEART BEATS. And we think again of what a tremendous pity it is that no sound 'commercially recorded' versions of this song (and others in these 'shorts') just do not exist. Even so, we were able, once again through Johnny Joyce, hear the best versions available. These little films have had a chequered history, passing from hand to hand, firm to firm so, possibly, its a miracle that they have survived to this day. Thank goodness they have for if anything recaptures the very early Bing these Mack Sennett's do.....was Mack really a sharp, far-seeing guy?

So, that's how the 7½ hours of undiluted Crosbyana were passed, all laced with congenial, if not convivial conversation. Not unnaturally, with everyone at last together, Michael endeavoured to ascertain some wishes for NEXT YEAR'S event! For example, dinner or buffet? 100 per cent for dinner....and perhaps most important, should we go to the expense of hiring video-projection equipment? The advantages of this equipment are crystal-clear pictures and items of Crosbyana that are on vido-tape but NOT ordinary film, e.g. Bing's oft-spoken of Norway concert in the year of Bing's death. Apparently a picture 5-feet square is easily obtained in, as we said, very sharp definition.

Hiring this equipment would put around £1.50 on the bill; as Drew Taylor of Wetherby pointed out, so what? The price of a gallon of petrol! These dinners are not sponsored in any way, and certainly no profit is made - or expected. Just the cost, the actual cost, of

the meal; we get the comfortable surroundings and the sound equipment free!

That there WILL be an even bigger event next year was evident and, of course, we have plenty of time to announce it all in BING.

The quiz idea will certainly be developed - we might even go the whole hog and take a leaf out of the book of Magnus Magnusson and have THE CROSBY BRAIN OF THE YEAR! Printed answer forms and a really intriguging set of questions, the answers to which must be carefully verified. Its quite a thought.

Finally, it is again essential that the warmest thanks be proffered to MICHAEL CRAMPTON for both his original idea 15 years ago and for the continuing development of this idea. And this year he worked in particularly adverse conditions and, indeed, but for penicillin and other medical aids it is doubtful if he would in the event have made it! And with your Editor/Secretary under 100 per cent he had to carry the main load - and this doesn't take into account the weeks of letter-writing and telephoning that are a necessary pre-requisite of the whole affair. Well done - and thanks Michael.

****

However, who knows what the economic conditions will be like in the Autumn of next year? True, the "price-of-a-gallon-of-petrol" thought is valid but we may also come up against the syndrome of "the last straw that broke the camel's back!" Still, we'll not counfenance such gloom! There will be a bigger, even bigger, event next year!

****

YOU'LL LIKE THIS! From ALASTAIR AIREY, 18 St. Philips Square, London, S.W.11.

I've had a lucky trip to Kenya, staying with a teaching colleague in a small Kikyuyu village, where all was friendly and welcoming. Grew to like beans and maize cooked in a variety of ways with a treat of fresh goat meat sometimes added - and ginger tea! Lovely!

We went often enough to the market bar and on the first occasion the manager treated his rare European customers to a change from the taped African 'pop' tunes (which I liked very much - lots of raw guitar) and we heard, believe it or not, a scratchy but resonant Bing singing SILENT NIGHT - in August. A nice surprise on a red, equatorial dusk!

WE BET IT WAS! Truly, Bing turns up everywhere....

Many members, especially the younger ones, have expressed great interest in the articles that used to appear regularly in newspapers and magazines about Bing. We always enjoy reading them again for we have many in the files. One we have always remembered particularly is the one which follows. This story appeared in a musical 'trade' paper and was written by its Editor, a fairly hard-bitten critic of jazz and dance music.

And it was written no less than 36 years ago - in 1944 to be precise and covers Bing's first-ever visit to Britain, or indeed, to Europe. And Bing had been a world-star - we avoid the description SUPER-STAR even tho' undoubtedly Bing was perhaps the first - because it is not a very clever description but more because it has been so grossly devalued in recent years - for no less than 13 years at least. Dozens of times throughout the halcyon 'Thirties it was rumoured, even proclaimed, that BING IS COMING! But come he did not - until World War II brought him in September of 1944. There is no doubt that Bing wanted to come here for he was already well aware (if only by thousands of admiring letters and his record sales) of his tremendous following in Britain; but his recording, filming and radio commitments precluded him leaving the States. It will be recalled what a treat and a novelty it was for him when he was able to visit Hawaii in 1936-37 for the making of WAIKIKI WEDDING.

Having 'tasted' Europe, as it were, happily Bing made his visits much more frequent, as we all know. But in reading the following article it should be remembered that we had been desperately anxious to see and hear this man Bing Crosby in person. We had a long wait and without television, not many saw him when he did come! Yet there seemed to be a feeling of national pride, national delight, when at last the truly fabulous Bing Crosby who had been singing to use for a dozen years was finally here.... And it is a sobering, yet wholly encouraging thought that a sizeable proportion of our members hadn't been born when this article appeared first in print:

BING WENT THE STRINGS OF OUR HEARTS!

A GREAT GUY ENTERTAINS THE TROOPS

Let me confess freely and unreservedly that I'm a fan! I always have been but even more so now that I've seen my idol in the flesh, heard him perform and forgetting that I am pretty blase after years of working with and among popular entertainers let myself go like a schoolboy, whooping and cheering all over the place and thoroughly enjoying myself.

> The man? Bing Crosby, of course, and I'd like to place on record at once that all of us who have met and seen him agree that a more charming, sociablable, kindly and genial guy you could never wish to meet.

All right, so I'm talking like a fan club secretary! So what? This is going to be a rave and if you happen to be a collaborationist from the Sinatra camp, well, there are plenty of other

things to read in the magazine this week.

BROADCAST

The scene was the Queensbury All-Services Club in London last Sunday. It was jam-packed from floor to ceiling with some 4,000 excited men and women in uniform. The word had gone around - Crosby was going to appear, and khaki and blue-clad figures had stood around for hours in the hot sunshine (over the Straits of Dover) to get in. As it was, hundreds and hundreds had to be disappointed since even the vast Queensbury club isn't elastic-sided.

Thanks to the courtesy of BBC executive CECIL MADDEN and Queensbury manager JOHN HARDING, I was one of the crowd - and was I excited! I certainly was, and I don't care who knows it.

Six o'clock. The red light on the stage flickered its warning, and then glowed steadily.

The BBC announcer told the world: "This is Variety Band Box" and we were off to an hour's recording of this popular broadcast.

It was a good show, too. Very lovely PAT KIRKWOOD was the commere, and I go for that madamoiselle in large quantities. She was gay, charming, announced the items with the right degree of gusto, and when she did her solo piece, really slayed the audience.
A special bouquet for her rendering of "Jenny"; its the first time I've ever really heard the words.

GERALDO and his concert orchestra were on the stage and very nice they sounded too, especially when SID BRIGHT played the solo piano in the "Warsaw Concerto" and received a well-deserved, roof-lifting ovation.

RODERICK JONES sang, so did OLIVE GROVES, and composer MANNING SHERWIN played a selection of his own compositions while the audience whistled away his well-known melodies very cheerfully.

Then we had TOMMY HANDLEY, who was in very good form and got some real belly-laughs.

Best gag was his description of a meal which included "Hamburger Pas de Calais" - a flying sausage with a lighted match stuck in the end!

> And then Tommy's voice took on an exciting, serious, note. He announced the next artist, and before the words were out of his mouth, the audience rose - for there he was - the one and only Bing Crosby - the man whose voice has brought pleasure and sanity into every corner of a mad world at war.

HE BOUNDED ONTO THE STAGE, BEAMING, AND STOOD THERE WHILE THE BIGGEST RECEPTION EVER ACCORDED TO AN ARTIST IN MY MEMORY THUNDERED THROUGH THE VAST HALL.

The minutes ticked by but the volume of sound didn't diminish even though producer STEPHEN WILLIAMS vainly tried to stem the tide.

Finally, order was restored and Tommy Handley welcomed Bing to England and presented him with a pipe to which Bing made the I.T.Mortal rejoinder: "Well, isn't that nice! What is it?" And so the badinage went to and fro until Bing ejaculated: "Well! For ever more !" and the stage was clear and it was song time.

Accompanying him at the piano was Pte. JAMES RUSIN - second pianist of the Glenn Miller band and a smashing ivory-tickler. Bing and Rusin had never met one another before that show.

BING GAGS

They had not rehearsed - just talked over the numbers for a few minutes beforehand - and neither of them had any music. But it didn't matter. Rusin is a first-class pianist able to tackle anything, and Bing is no slouch, either.

Oh! But I'm running ahead! The fem-fans are dying to know what Bing looks like - and here am I talking about music!

> Well, he looks much younger in the flesh than he does on films, and he's much slimmer. He's baldish but not gleamingly so and he's taller than you imagine. His eyes are just about the most vivid blue I've ever seen, and his tie was pretty vivid too!

Then he sang - and I don't have to tell you what THAT was like. First SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - then (and what a gasp of joy when he announced it!) LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY, and finally in response to requests, MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU.

He said he wasn't sure of the words of that one so, in the middle, he suddenly sang DOES ANYONE KNOW THE WORDS TO THIS SONG? and it fitted the music, and it was TERRIFIC!

And so, with a nice little speech from Bing to the boys fighting overseas, the broadcast ended amidst tumultuous applause, and we all sat back well satisfied.

> BUT THERE WAS MORE TO COME. AFTER AN INTERVAL BING SPORTINGLY CAME BACK AND GAVE THE BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE FORCES HALF-AN-HOUR'S ENTERTAINMENT - AND THAT REALLY WAS SOMETHING!

He gagged with comic Joe de Vita about Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra and pulled two of the best cracks I've heard in years.

> One was when he announced that he and Sinatra were going to form a double-act to go on the halls after the War under the name of "Breathless and Hairless".

The other concerned Bob Hope. He said:

> "You know, Bob and I are really great pals. There's nothing in the world that I wouldn't do for Bob Hope, and there's nothing that Bob Hope wouldn't do for me. And that's how we both go through life - doing nothing for each other!"

But in Between all this we had a surprise item. Bing announced that he was going to bring a young lady on the stage whom he

believed we liked. He had never heard her sing but he was told she was the Dinah Shore of this country and he wanted us to give her a big hand.

Well, when he announced her name as ANNE SHELTON there was no need to ask for "a big hand". She got it - a tremendous ovation, and one, I think, that even startled Bing - who obviously can't be expected to know how our vocalists rate with us.

Anne looked as excited as any of us. It was a brilliant brainwave of Cecil Madden's that brought her there after broadcasting her own programme "Anne to You" and how the audience appreciated it!

She sang "I'll Get By" very charmingly. Then - without any rehearsal - she gagged around with Bing as if she'd been doing it all her life. But when Bing said: "How about you and me singing a duet together?" Anne just looked into those vivid blue eyes heretofore mentioned and breathed: "I've dreamed of this moment all my life". And it wasn't an act, either, we could all see that she meant it.

> So they sang "Easter Parade" - America's Bing Crosby and Britain's Anne Shelton, and Anne didn't let the old country down. Far from it. Her voice blended beautifully with his, she copied his twiddly-bits against the melody, and it was a really terrific performance.

Finally, in response to shouts from all over the house, Bing sang "White Christmas", and the show was over and we came out into the crowded streets of Soho with thousands of people milling around to see the star leave.

> Now, what is the secret of Bing Crosby? Well, it is his amazingly relaxed personality that gets you. There is nothing studied or artificial about his movements, his speech, or his singing. He's just a natural good guy - and he's essentially masculine.

It was interesting to note that men and girls alike were completely captivated by him. Tough Commandos and burly sergeant-majors were among those who yelled out for him to sing "White Christmas", not hysterical girls.

And outside, it wasn't what we used to call "flappers" who waited to see him. No - men and women of all ages and nationalities. It seems that the whole world loves Bing.

Later that evening, Bing was dining at Kettner's Restaurant in Soho when the crowds recognised his car standing outside. They chanted "We want Bing!" until finally he came out on the balcony and sang "Pennies from Heaven" to the thousands of people below.

> NOR WAS THIS ALL FOR, AS IT WAS GETTING DARK, THE CROWDS ASSEMBLED AGAIN AND CALLED HIM OUT. THIS TIME HE SANG THEM EIGHT SONGS BEFORE THEY WOULD DISPERSE, AND THEY SHONE THEIR TORCHES ON HIM AS HE SANG.....OF ALL THE HOLLYWOOD SCENES IN WHICH BING HAS FIGURED, SURELY NONE CAN COMPARE WITH THE ARTISTRY AND HUMANITY OF THIS ONE...

Well, there we ar. Anne Shelton said everything when I asked her what she thought of him and she replied: "He is just the greatest thing that ever happened."

In a nation war-weary and war-torn with "doodlebugs" still reminding us that the endis not yet, Bing has brought a breath of peace-time atmosphere - a reminder that there are other things in the world to get excited about than battles.

And that evening did more for Transatlantic relationship than a hundred speeches.

THANKS, BING!

****

What a fine story - in 1944! And as we said in the introduction, written by one of those hard-bitten jazz experts of the time. 1944 - and not a lot different in 1976! Things never changed where Bing and the British public were concerned.

* In case younger members miss the reason for the gag about a flying sausage with a lighted match, it was a typical Tommy Handley quip referring to the V1 flying bombs then raining on London - pilotless planes loaded with high explosive launched from the Calais area.
* And Anne Shelton has many times told of her exciting meeting with Bing on this occasion; indeed, there can be few members who haven't actually heard the recording wherein she sang "Easter Parade" so stylishly with Bing - and gagged with him so easily.
* This was also the occasion when the police got seriously worried about the huge crowds besieging Bing, well aware that the flying-bombs were liable to come to earth anywhere. This was one of the reasons why Bing sang to the crowds - with a plea that they would disperse quickly after he had sung...
* The article in the original was accompanied by a picture of Bing giving a press conference, surrounded by journalists sitting in a typical pose before a microphone and answering an obviously highly excited female reporter!
* And it is worth noting, surely, that "White Christmas" was even then a song Bing just had to sing.....

When Bing started singing all those years ago, he sang because he enjoyed singing. He said so. And if you were ever lucky enough to be in his company for a few minutes, you knew it was true.

He could have had no idea at all that by that simple act he was creating for the future - for goodness knows how many years to come - all the discussion, both erudite and fanatic, all the argument, all the correspondence, all the research -

- AND ALL THE MANY, THOUSANDS, OF MOST CHERISHED FRIENDSHIPS...

STAN AUSTIN
(Yiewsley)

Quite a thought, Stan.....

WHITE CHRISTMAS

by KEITH PARKINSON

"Christmas is a three-day television festival dedicated to the birth of Bing Crosby. In order to celebrate and commemorate the event old Bing Crosby movies are screened on television without cessation for three solid days. Appropriately enough, the most popular old Bing Crosby movie on television is called WHITE CHRISTMAS."

(Willis Hall & Bob Monkhouse in THE A-Z OF TELEVISION 1971)

******

The idea for the film was first put forward in 1946. Irving Berlin, no doubt with the success of THIS IS THE ARMY in mind, wanted to write a musical about what happens to soldiers, and particularly generals, after a War. Initially it was to be a stage musical starring Walter Huston and it was given the title of OVER MY SHOULDER. Huston died before the show was staged and Berlin sold the concept to Paramount Pictures for another Berlin-Crosby-Astaire film to build on the success of BLUE SKIES. In the course of developing Berlin's show the song WHITE CHRISTMAS was thought to be a better promotional title for the film. In the movie Dean Jagger played the part written with Walter Huston in mind. Meanwhile, Fred Astaire had become unavailable and was replaced by Donald O'Connor who was in turn replaced by Danny Kaye.

"Picturegoer" magazine carried an unusual story in the issue of November 28, 1953. It was stated that part of the HOLIDAY INN soundtrack would be used in the film, a plan that obviously produced little benefit and, of course, all the songs were specially recorded for the new production.

Paramount Studios had an 'open day' for reporters whilst filming was in progress. Stage 15, one of the studio's largest shooting stages was in use for the set of the strafing of a war-torn town. Bing was being hurled under a wrecked truck by Danny Kaye and unfortunately the "take" has to be re-done when director Mike Curtiz noticed that Bing was wearing red socks instead of the regulation army variety.

In the book, THE MAKING OF THE GOODIES DISASTER MOVIE, the incident is related of how it was felt that the Goodies' film could benefit by a few star names. "Names that can make a film rather special. A film like WHITE CHRISTMAS, for instance." The book's author then humourously describes ringing Hollywood for a cast list of WHITE CHRISTMAS but due to a bad line a misunderstanding seems to have occurred! After a

time they managed to find what I was looking for," the writer continues, "as it was apparently written on their copy of the sheet music I copied it down."

WHITE CHRISTMAS - CAST LIST

Emma Dreaming
Arfur White
Chriss Muss

Jess Like-Dee
Juan Swee
Hugh Sterno

Wendy-Treetops-Glissen
Anne Chilled-Wren
Liz Anne
"Two Ears" Laybelle
Cindy Snow

Emma Dreaming
Arfur White
Chris Musswit
Avery Crease
Miss Carr
Dai Wright

Mayor Dazeby
Mary Ann Bright
Anna-May Hall-York-Rhys
Mrs. B. White.

The magazine HARVARD LAMPOON included the film in its List of the Worst Films of 1954 and gave the film a further award: "Greatest mayhem committed on a myth."

The film's profits were split in such a way that Paramount relinquished 76% of the net takings to Bing, Danny Kaye and Irving Berlin. Director Michael Curtiz declined a percentage and received a fee of 175,000 dollars.

It is the only film of Bing's included in VARIETY'S list of the top 200 films of all time. USA and Canadian rental fees totalled 12,000,000 dollars. I have excluded the MGM compilation THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT because, although it took 20,000 dollars more, it was not strictly a Bing film. WHITE CHRISTMAS was also the top grossing film in the USA and Canada in 1954.

That year saw Bing's fourteenth and final appearance in MOTION PICTURE HERALD'S annual top ten box-office stars' listing - he was placed eighth.

Editor: An no doubt director Michael Curtiz is still kicking himself. Thanks to Keith for some new facts on this momentous film. I love the film and can watch it any time but, dare we say, it was sickly and cloying perhaps in its sentimentality to the "old man" the General!

For those who weren't around at the time and for those who like to have their memories revived, you can see how the film was advertised on hoardings and posters throughout Britain at the time of its showing here. It certainly illustrates what Bing always proclaimed about insisting on NOT being the only star featured in the billing but sharing it with his colleagues. Characteristically, Bing insists this was because, if the film was a "flop" they could share the blame! Nothing about sharing the credit! Also, the strange (to us) story of Dorothy Squires and The Andrews Sisters - 1953! See Leeds quiz report.....

PLAZA
PICCADILLY CIRCUS
Weekdays
Programmes 10.35, 12.45, 3.18, 5.31, 8.30,
Sundays 4.30, 7.30
Regret no phone bookings
The Picture Youve Been Dreaming of...
HIT TUNES include
'COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS INSTEAD OF SHEEP'
'BEST THINGS HAPPEN WHILE YOURE DANCING'
IRVING BERLIN'S
White Christmas
starring
BING CROSBY · DANNY KAYE
ROSEMARY CLOONEY
VERA-ELLEN
Presented IN
VISTAVISION
Startling SIZE CLARITY REALISM
Seen without Eye-strain
Enriched by PERSPECTA Stereophonic Sound
with DEAN JAGGER • Colour by TECHNICOLOR
Lyrics and Music by IRVING BERLIN · Produced by Robert Emmett Dolan
Directed by MICHAEL CURTIZ · Dances and Musical Numbers Staged by Robert Alton
Written for the screen by Norman Krasna, Norman Panama and Melvin Frank
A PARAMOUNT PICTURE

ANDREWS SIS: SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT

NEW YORK, Wednesday.

DECISION of the Andrews Sisters as to whether or not to take on Dorothy Squires as replacement for Patty Andrews will probably be known next week. Maxene and Laverne will be back from their Australian tour, in which they are working as a duo.

If they decide the duo set-up is satisfactory, they may cancel their tentative deal with Miss Squires.

"To show how much I care, I wore my hair," quipped long-playing Crooner **Bing Crosby**, 72, after taking the concert stage in New York City last week. Crosby, who last appeared on Broadway in 1931, began a two-week stint with Old Friend **Rosemary Clooney**, 48. Also on the program: Wife **Kathryn**, 43, and their three teen-age children. Though his locks may be thinner, the Groaner's baritone seemed as full as ever as he traipsed through almost 50 songs in the three-hour show. Afterward Crosby reminisced about the first time he played New York in the late '20s. He and Fellow Singer Al Rinker had put together an act for the **Paul Whiteman** Band. "We had been a big hit on the road," recalls Bing, "but we were taken off the bill in New York because we didn't do well. Paul put us back in the band, just

ACKNOWLEDGING

our thanks as always to all contributors to this issue; especially perhaps to MISS KAREN WESLEY, of Upminster in Essex, a member of ours who is making her way in the arduous career of professional journalism. The story reproduced in this issue - with grateful acknowledgements to WOMAN'S REALM which first published the story) is THE WAY YOU FEEL ABOUT BING, complete with original song music. Karen, who secured an interview with Bing just before he died, was responsible for several excellent articles on Bing and this story is, as you will see, a follow-up to some of Karen's earlier articles. We wish Karen well in what is a difficult profession.

Members should note that the BRUNSWICK records advertisement is reproduced purely as a "curio" - it dates from 1953. Needless to say, the records are not easily procurable today! It is of particular interest, we feel, in that it marked a significant time in the record world for you will see that it advertises both 78rpm issues, AND the then new-fangled Long Playing records of 33 1-3rd rpm. These are, in fact, the earliest 10-inch LPs bearing the LA prefix. And, of course, most of the 10" albums shewn have since been reissued in 12-inch form with title adjusted to twelve instead of eight. We mention that this is just a "curio" for, despite what was said in the last issue about the Whiteman OLD GOLD broadcasts it still didn't prevent some members from asking whether these broadcasts were available!

The story of Bing's special posthumous induction into the All-American Collegiate Golf Hall of Fame was supplied to us, as are so many interesting Crosby items, by MR. JUSTICE FRANCIS X. SMITH, of the Supreme Court of New York, for which our thanks for this item we surely would not have seen otherwise.
And we have learned that Francis was a considerable war hero, and was in fact awarded the Silver Star for his part in capturing Sugar Loaf Hill on Okinawa - described at the time as "one of the most costly single objectives of the Pacific War." One war-correspondent described it at the time as: "The 23-year-old Marine First Lieutenant took that bloody slope with his 80 men after previous attacks had strewn it with American dead".

Francis was known in those days, too, as "Bobby-Sox Smith" - because of his love of swing music, athletics, - and Bing! He was wounded three times on Okinawa and, as a result, invalided home. In a subsequent newspaper report it was said that Francis had declared "that the girl I pick will have to be a connoisseur of crooners! She must like Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra equally well, the way I do!"

Actually, he was knocked out of the War after the Sugar Loaf Hill action by - a Japanese sniper.

The piece about the Scottish lady, Aggie Arthur, asking Bing to sing WHITE CHRISTMAS (and Bing forgetting the words!) was kindly submitted by several readers.

"AN ABIDING PRESENCE....."

BING: BRIGHTER THAN A STAR

****
* "All I do is, I just do the same old thing every time." - Bing Crosby *
****

by TOM SHALES
(WASHINGTON POST SERVICE)
To whom grateful acknowledgements. Story supplied by PAUL MORRISON, Tyne and Wear).

BING CROSBY'S reign outlasted all of the hairs apparent. They came, they went, they did or didn't acknowledge what they owed him, but even when Crosby's own popularity softened and his record sales slipped, he remained somehow, somewhere, comfortingly there. He wasn't merely a star, nor merely the greatest star. He was an abiding presence.

You realised what the sound of his voice meant to you when you heard it from a gaudy jukebox in a two-bit bar on that lonely holiday away from home. You heard "White Christmas" and you were home again. You could warm your hands on the sound of his voice.

What was wonderful was the way he could inspire sentimental binges without giving in to sentimentality himself. He kept his dignity even when we went to pieces.

"All I do is, I just do the same old thing every time," Bing Crosby told an interviewer in 1975, "except each time its a different song."

Crosby was more natural and more listenable than any other singer. This was music blithe as friendly chatter, free of bombast or pose, direct and intimate and personal.

In liberating songs from pretentious artsiness and formal cant, he helped make popular song one of the greatest arts of all, all the greater for its utter accessibility - an art closed to no one. Crosby was a democratizer, an exemplary egalitarian, and he became a singing spokesman as well, a summation of American pop as well as its immaculate practitioner.

In his 50year career THE TIMES of London noted, Crosby's voice was "heard more often by more people than that of any mortal in history."

Yet he remain the most unassuming of institutions.

Crosby was able to triumph at a stroll, to conquer casually and without looking the aspiring conqueror. There is almost no evidence to support wayward suspicions that his breeziness and nonchalance were fakes; there seems genuine modesty in his decision to title his autobiography, "Call Me Lucky".

You would never have caught him clawing his way into gossip columns or elbowing for attention on talk shows. He didn't drag his emotional problems through the newspapers, and he didn't posture when he sang emotional songs. Yet he could trigger an emotional response more deftly and efficiently than some performers with hearts on their sleeves and sobs in their throats.

In the movies, particularly the Road pictures he made with Bob Hope, Crosby showed a genuine comedic gift that was relaxed and spontaneous.
In THE COUNTRY GIRL, more than in his priest movies('GOING MY WAY, THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S' Crosby proved his abilities as a dramatic actor, though he didn't endanger his acting technique with acting lessons (He hadn't endangered his singing technique either with singing lessons).
But in key moments of THE COUNTRY GIRL, as the alcoholic husband of Grace Kelly, Crosby may have called upon his own bouts earlier on with the bottle in making this portrayal convincing and alarming.
Its easier and more pleasant to remember his romping with Hope, however. This was a public show biz friendship that remained entertaining and never grew forced or fatuous. In the "Road" pictures, the jokes were often at Crosby's expense. During one of the films, Hope suddenly hears violins welling up on the soundtrack. He looks into the camera and says: "Okay folks, you can go out for popcorn now. He's going to sing again."

PLAYED A PRIEST

One respected Crosby particularly for the things about his life that he kept private. Though he played a priest at least three times in the movies, his Catholicism remained something personal; he never really tried to drag God into the act. He didn't tell audiences they were 'beautiful' nor congratulate us for having the good taste to love him. He preferred to think he was the fortunate one; he was swinging on a star.

In recent years, after a long period of virtual retirement, Crosby stepped softly back into the limelight. Sometimes he turned up in unlikely places. When one of his favourite subjects, tequila, was discussed in the rock magazine ROLLING STONE, Crosby wrote a friendly letter to the Editor disputing a few points about his delicacy. It was published and Crosby's signature followed by an editor's note for the disbelieving: "This is the real Bing Crosby".

Late last year, Crosby's career was dissected in, of all places, The Village Voice, where writer Gary Giddins chastised Crosby somewhat for having forsaken pure jazz in order to occupy the middle of the road, and win over his weeping populist constituency.

Then Giddins suggested that Crosby was not only a troubadour but an ombudsman. "He reminds me of a line in an old Carl Reiner-Mel Brooks routine about a pop singer who says of his audience, "I am them, they are me, we are all singing. I have the mouth".

ULTIMATE ICON

Giddins called Crosby "the ultimate pop icon" and concluded: " He is us, and we are him, only he has the mouth".

There will probably never be another singer as widely popular as Bing Crosby. Where Crosby's influence will end we can never know, however. Whenever a singer tries to speak to us individually and not to a mob beneath a pedestal, Bing Crosby's legacy will be perpetuated.
"I'll never have a hit again," Crosby once told The Los Angeles Times. "There's no chance. I'll keep on singing as long as there's a market and as long as the voice doesn't alter too much. I'd just like to do a job now and keep in touch with the industry. Its been my life for 50 years. Its been a long, long, pull and I've had great results. I can't complain if it stops tomorrow."

It stopped Friday, October 14, 1977. But he is still with us, and we are still him. And we will be for many Christmasses to come.

Editor: A telling and significant article - the kind we like to sort out for reprinting in BING.

He is still with us - and we are still him....

****

PAUL MORRISON also tells us that at last MGM have released an edited version of HIGH SOCIETY on Super 8mm in colour and, of course, with sound. It lasts 34 mins. and concentration is on the songs - happily.

More of this elsewhere.

THE WAY YOU FEEL ABOUT BING

So very many of you shared my memories of Bing Crosby, writes our youngest staff member Karen Wesley. And among your fond tributes was this song . . .

FOLLOWING my tribute to Bing last January, I received many letters from fellow fans of the "Old Groaner" and it has been a joy to share your happy memories.

First there was 80-year-old Mrs. K. Collins of Thame in Oxfordshire. A fan of Bing for many, many years, she offered to give me one of Bing's earliest recordings. In those days, Bing sang with Harry Barris and Al Rinker, this trio being better known as the Rhythm Boys. The record, which also features the great Paul Whiteman Orchestra, contains songs like *Louise* and *So The Bluebirds And The Blackbirds Got Together*. I was delighted to accept Mrs. Collins' kind offer and, needless to say, the disc now has pride of place in my collection.

Then there were those who wrote to tell me of chance encounters with Bing during the Second World War, during which Bing organized his Crosby Camp Tours and travelled over 50,000 miles entertaining troops throughout Europe. Mrs. S. Roberts of Newcastle was one of the lucky people who saw Bing perform during these years. She wrote to tell me she'd attended the opening of Stage Door Canteen in London while she was in the WRNS.

It was, in fact, Bing's stage appearances that thrilled his fans the most—especially those at the London Palladium, one of Bing's favourite venues.

One such fan was Mrs. F. Patterson from Sunderland who not only told me how much she'd loved his performance but also sent me a photograph she'd taken of her idol at the stage door.

Another fan with fond memories of Bing Crosby is Mr. Arthur Lane of Barnstaple in Devon. The news of Bing's death prompted him to sit down and compose the tender song, published here, as his own special tribute.

But it's not just we fans who miss Bing. The stars who've worked with him have also found he's left a gap that's hard to fill. Among them is Rosemary Clooney who co-starred with Bing in the film *White Christmas*. "I just couldn't believe it when I heard he'd died," she told me. "It seemed as if he would be with us for ever."

I'm sure all of us who feel this way about Bing will appreciate the sentiments in this poem, also written by Arthur Lane.

When a voice is stilled
Then the air seems chilled
And the world seems to stop
for a while,
There is something gone
But the show goes on
You hide your tears with a
smile.

That was Bing

Slowly
A man a-mongst men, and right up to the end, all the
world was his friend, That was Bing. A warm heart-ed guy, made you
laugh made you cry, like a star in the sky, That was Bing. The
pict-ures he made with Hope and La-mour, the
fun and the games on the set, He didn't have time to
make just one more This much I know he'd re-gret. The
years brought him fame, he was al-ways the same, with his
heart in the game, That was Bing. The songs that he sung, and ap-
plause that he won, it was al-ways great fun, That was
Bing. Now he's car-ried his load, and he's on a new road, But his
mem-'ry will ne-ver gr-ow dim, He taught the world how to
sing, That was Bing, that was Bing, that was Bing . . .

LETTERS

ALWAYS A POPULAR FEATURE...

ERIC JACKSON, 202 Barnsley Rd, Wath-upon-Dearne, Nr. Rotherham, S. Yorks:

Just listening to COME RAIN OR COME SHINE, and BING'S MAGIC, recently obtained. How can we catalogue these records? We would be in order to include Ken Barnes's new re-recordings. But where and how? And what of all the other material that has - and is- come out? THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN RADIO, THE MURRAY HILL SET, BING'S PARTY, and sb on. Can these be included? Where does it end? Can we honestly include the Totem's, the Spokanes, the Biographs? Its a nightmare!

Editor: Those who take their discography and cataloguing seriously are certainly facing a few problems these days! What do the experts say?

IAN RIDOUT, 18 Lorina Rd., Ramsgate, Kent:
There is a new shop opened in the old Covent Garden Market (No. 43); its called THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT. It specialises in secondhand LPs and have quite a selection of Bing albums - but you would need a bottomless purse because they are very dear. For example, MFP Mono BING CROSBY is £8.50 while the Longines set (5 albums) is - £80!

Editor: That's Entertainment? That's inflation to a bizarre degree. We mention this ONLY to make sure members do not waste their time finding this place. We've heard of this place before - and its difficult to find, we hear. Leave it that way! Don't bother.

DON BOSTOCK, 13 Gorse Hill Lane, Virginia Water, Surrey:
I think you made a boo-boo in ON THE BOX last issue! I watched BBC-2 TV that Saturday afternoon and video-taped ROAD TO MOROCCO and ROAD TO UTOPIA (NOT HONG-KONG). I also saw on the box and I don't think you mentioned this, the Walt Disney LEGEND OF SLEEP HOLLOW which Bing narrated and sang several songs.....

Editor: Guilty - and sorry - re the films. But we did mention SLEEPY HOLLOW!

CHAS. WILTSHIRE, 65 Gaston Way, Lavant, Chichester, Sussex:
I enjoyed reading the little poem by Norman Toogood about his difficulty in choosing what Bing records to play. I know it was a 'literary' question, but I solve it as follows. I have about a hundred LPs, and cassettes and play at least one each day. Then the one played goes to the back, as it were. They are in no particular order and I stick to the 'as it comes' order and each one is a pleasant experience. But I must admit that when it turns out to be a 30's recording the pleasure is slightly more satisfying! My youth was spent growing up to that lovely voice of Bing's...

Editor: Well, they all get a fair crack of the whip by that system, Chas. And wear is minimised!

(More letters over....

VIC BYNE, 28 Upton Rd., Slough, Berks:
What a piece of good fortune to be able to resd that City of London scroll (see last BING); no doubt, like most other members I've wondered what the precise wording of it was. The press in London only reported the fact that a scroll had been presented to Bing "for services to the people of London".
I too have often thought that as a nation we should have given Bing an official 'honour' although, as you said, what form it could have taken would have been difficult but there have been precedents, e.g. Sir Douglas Fairbanks Jnr.

> I have also long thought that the United Nations might have done something in that line "for services rendered to humanity".

If you remember, I think it was during the 50's that an American, whose name escapes me, tore up his US passport and proclaimed himself "The First Citizen of the World". I distinctly remember thinking at the time: "You're too late chum - Bing earned that title years ago, crossing all borders, territorial, colour and freeds.

> Editor: Hmmm...that IS an original thought - the United Nations! We had people writing to Mr. Harold Wilson when he was premier, about an honour for Bing; others even wrote to John Betjeman, the poet-laureate for a word or two in rhyme on Bing...and indeed, when Bing was received at Buckingham Palace, we did think something was in the offing. But, as we were glad to show in the previous issue of BING, only the City of London - not the City, Greater London Council to be precise, did anything concrete. Official British honours are sparse among foreigners and Sir Douglas Fairbanks is the main one that comes to mind. That was special for diplomatic work between this country and his country, the US, in a time of great stress. But, the United Nations! Toobusy trying to separate the warring nations....

TOM SHAW, 51 Venmore St., Liverpool 5.:
I should like to tell you a story so horrifying in its content that it would put to shame anything that Hammer Films could possibly dream up. It concerns my prized 78s...I was born in 1927 so my boyhood days concided with Bing's rise to fame and it was around the early 40's that I started to collect Crosby records of that time but soon I found my interest took in all those lovely songs of the 30's.

I left home in the 50's and it was many years before I returned - to find that a cousin had laid claim to my prized gramophone in my absence. He happened to have four children and these 'little darlings' had free access to my records. I subsequently learned that these precious 78s had ended up being used as non-returnable boomerangs in the back-garden. A story that deserves an "X" certificate if any does!

But of course, I started a newer collection....

> Editor: Horrifying indeed - and I've heard some! So many people had a consuming interest in Bing and his records - then came the War, and all kinds of other interruptions.... what a boon has been the invention of the LP, enabling an old interest to be gloriously revived. I suppose its true to say that a collection, with diligence, can be made these days that would have take 20 years - before the LP. Now it can be done in 2 or 3 years.....if not more quickly than that.

Michael Duxbury, 16 Boxwood Dr., Holly Tree Village, Blackburn, Lancs:

A point I would like to make concerns printing errors on record labels and/or sleeves. One which stands out in my collection is the label on THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT! Side 2, track 5, reads RAZZLE-DAZZLE (From the musical production 'CHIGAGO') 2.47 Chappel & Co.

Not only the wrong song but also note the spelling of Chicago.

The song, of course, on the LP and on the sleeve is SEND IN THE CLOWNS. Could you please tell me if this occurred on all the copies of this record or is mine a bit special?

Editor: Well, sounds a bit special. My two copies are correct and I've heard no one else mention this slip-up. Does anyone have a misnamed label like Michael's. Perhaps Ken Barnes knows something of an early error that was mostly corrected? ROXY, on the Bing/Fred Astaire album comes ffom the show "Chicago" - and we've heard the title RAZZLE-DAZZLE - but can't fit it in!

BILL DREWELL, 13 Welton Rd., Daventry, Northants, NN11 5DP:

Have you any ideas as to how we could have some binders made for putting our copies of BING in, so as we could build up our own library. If these were made professionally I am sure they would go down well with members. It would be great to have the magazines protected as good as new - and make nice 'books' for future browsing and reference.

Editor: As a matter of fact, we have a few members who do have their copies bound - and smart they are, too. Perhaps our good friend and benefactor, JOHNNY JOYCE will explore this for us?

JIM NEWELL, 17 Edwina Close, Bitterne, Southampton, Hants:

Just had a wonderful bit of luck! My barber's wife (!) told him to throw out his 78 collection of records as he never played them....and I happened to call on him the day be brought them down to the shop. His cardboard box contained 52 Bing 78s and 8 of brother Bob's with his Bobcats! These were the only ones he collected. He asked if I would like to take them, clean them up, see if they played okay - and if so, give him a pound or two. They played well and filtered on my amplifier they really are great with Bing's voice coming over in tremendous style.

Have just come back from Phil's (Clarke) club (The Southern Bing Crosby Club) where we saw HOLIDAY INN. Phil's a great guy and does a tremendous job for us down here.

Editor: Many write to tell uf of the entertaining Bing evenings that Phil Clarke provides....and JIM NEWELL sent us a private painting of Bing which cost him £60. Very good, too. Which reminds me, there was a painting on show at Leeds which was one of the finest I've ever seen - Bing-wise or other....it showed Bing in the recording studio, with the orchestra, the mikes, the lighted sign "RECORDING" and bore the most astonishing detail. Apart from ascert-aining that it was painted by our member ARTHUR DELANEY of Greater Manchester (Lowry country!) I didn't learn much else about it. But it is a remarkable painting. And what of Jim Newell's record pick up! One never knows where they're coming from!

OUR MEMBERS CONTINUE TO REPORT THEIR ASTONISHING GLOBE-TROTTING! BRIAN LEWIS (8 Crosby Square, London EC3A 6AN - what an address!) Rev. MICHAEL COLLINS, Highgate have just returned from Houston

BING CROSBY

records exclusively for

Brunswick RECORDS

† *These records are Brunswick 78's, the remainder being long playing (33⅓ r.p.m.) discs*

BRUNSWICK LTD., branch of THE DECCA RECORD COMPANY LIMITED, 1-3 BRIXTON ROAD, LONDON, S.W.9

YOURS IS MY HEART ALONE
Yours is my heart alone; Beautiful love; I kiss your hand madame; The kiss in your eyes; Girl of my dreams; I'll remember April; It must be true; I surrender dear LA 8684

MERRY CHRISTMAS
Silent night, holy night; Adeste fideles; White Christmas; God rest ye merry, gentlemen; I'll be home for Christmas; Faith of our Fathers; Jingle bells*; Santa Claus is comin' to town*
*with THE ANDREWS SISTERS LA 8686

SONG HITS FROM BROADWAY SHOWS
People will say we're in love; Oh! what a beautiful morning; If I loved you; Close as pages in a book; They say it's wonderful; I love you; Evelina; The eagle and me LA 8675

BING SINGS THE HITS
Vaya con Dios; My love, my love; Down by the riverside; Hello young lovers; Secret love; I've never been in love before; Changing partners; Y'all come LA 8674

SOME FINE OLD CHESTNUTS
Do you ever think of me; I never knew; Somebody loves me; After you've gone; Sleepy time gal; Dinah; I never knew; I can't give you anything but love LA 8673

If you love me—I won't care; Liebchen 05313†
Young at heart; I get so lonely 05277†
Secret love; My love, my love 05269†

and Florida respectively - not to mention Vic Byne in Hawaii ! - all come back with the depressing news that the Crosby-record scene is most scanty, to say the least.

> Clearly, America is neglecting one of its greatest heritages and this is sad to contemplate. But we hasten to add that this is certainly not the fault of the American people who are suffering at the fast-buck policy of the record companies to an even greater extent than we are. And that's saying something. C & W., Motown (sic), punk, black-rock, Presley certainly have their 'market'. But should it be to the exclusion of virtually everything else? We have already dilated at some length on the ways of the said companies - and the resultant mess they have got into.
>
> HAPPILY, we are sure there will be a renaissance - a return to a more discerning attitude. If only to save themselves! We are quite confident of that return to sanity.

NEIL ROBINSON, 4 Hillcrest Av., Newton Rd., Burton-On-Trent:

Its amazing how a song title suddenly recalls a pleasant memory of a bygone age. I was explaining to a friend how Bing's songs belong to a certain time and times in my lifetime, because wherever I was and whatever I was doing, Bing was always there, singing his unforgettable songs. Thus, I had no need for a diary.
After reading the last BING I visited one of my local shops - and lo! and behold, the first LP on show under POPULAR MALE (promotion?) was BING'S PARTY. It was soon in my possession. I agree it is a 'must'....the "you noddied; YOU NODDIED" false start is priceless, typical humour from a group of experts. The enclosed cuttings from my local evening paper indicate an unusually slap-happy piece of editing!

My wife and I are attending a wedding on Saturday. My main task is to persuade the organist to cancel HERE COMES THE BRIDE and substitute COME SHARE THE WINE, More appropriate, I feel. When I discuss Bing with my wife - which is very frequently - she invariably sums it up by saying "He was a good man", a small tribute but heartwarmingly meant. Thanks for helping us to keep so alive a very special memory.

(Cont. over.

THEN AGGIE ASKED BING TO SING "WHITE CHRISTMAS"

NOW warmer and brighter skies are here, American tourists are finding their way once again to St Andrews.

Most visit the Woollen Mill.

And every time she hears an American voice in the mill, Mrs Aggie Arthur, one of the assistants, recalls the time Bing Crosby was lost for words there.

Everywhere Bing went in the town, he was mobbed by tourists.

So he asked if he could come along to the shop after closing time and do some shopping in peace.

When he arrived, he headed straight to Aggie's counter and chose a length of tweed.

As she took Bing's money, Aggie suggested he sing a song while she was getting his change.

"Sure," said Bing. "What would you like me to sing?"

Aggie plumped for his most famous song of all, "White Christmas."

SO, with a smile, Bing leaned against the counter and started to croon the old favourite charmingly as ever.

Everyone in the shop stopped to listen to the surprise treat—then suddenly, to their amazement, Bing dried up!

Yes, he'd actually forgotten the words of "White Christmas," the song he must have sung thousands of times!

Undaunted, he just hummed a few bars then finished the song to rapturous applause from all those still in the shop.

Though saddened to think she'll never see Bing Crosby back in St Andrews again, Aggie hopes his widow, Kathy, may make a sentimental journey to the town some time.

Aggie's sure she'd like to share the memory of the day Bing forgot "White Christmas."

Editor: A nice letter; one that sums up the feelings of so many people....no need for a diary! Music is certainly among the most evocative of things...why, I can even remember my wedding day. Bing's latest record was WHISTLER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW - so a glance at the discography will show you when your venerable Editor was 'hitched'...But, I was no whistler, and my late mother-in-law was one of the finest ladies I ever met. But the song does the trick in bringing back those bygone and cherished days.... I hope Neil succeeded with the organist, too. What about substituting WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT? with the risque - even naughty for BING - insinuation that the groom wasn't too upset when the gold of the day gave way to the blue of the night.....?

The cuttings Neil supplied referred to(in the radio programmes) THE BING CROSBY SHOP WITH DICK POWELL. The second mentioned THE BING CORSBY SHOW WITH GARY COOPER. Neil is expecting a show by BING GROVENEY, who married a Fox starlet.... which reminds us, CALL ME LUCKY (see Leeds quiz) was "as told to PETE MARTIN" if you didn't know.

MR. S. SMYTH sent us a lovely full-page advertisement in an Australian paper, with the following in huge letters :

LINDEMANS MONTILLO: SWEET SHERRY !

SMOOTHER THAN CARY GRANT:
RICHER THAN A ROCKEFELLER.
MELLOWER THAN BING CROSBY.

As Syd says: Written by a discerning ad. man. If THAT doesn't sell it nothing will...

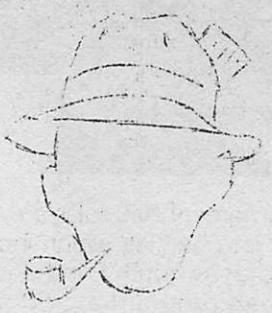
TONY PEVERETT, 7 Burgh Mount, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 1ER:

Ken Barnes, in his acceptable book, writes: re FEELS GOOD, FEELS RIGHT....was it really necessary to include such a rusty and creaking old warhorse as THE ROSE IN HER HAIR?"
To me this was one of the most beautiful of all Bing's recordings. It just goes to show once again that whatever Bing recorded there was always someone who liked it!!

Editor: 'Twas ever thus! But you're not alone re ROSE IN HER HAIR - I don't think a good tune ever gets rusty and creaking. But, as they maintain, one man's meat &c. I mean, ol' John Bignell doesn't like TEMPTATION! Which reminds me, another correspondent who MUST remain anonymous wrote, apropos John's assessment of this song..."bring back hanging!" Hanging? Oh no - transportation perhaps. But not hanging, surely.

We wrote, on behalf of the Circle, thanking ANN MANN for her BING radio-show programmes on BBC radio, expressing the hope that she had another series 'up her sleeve' so to speak. Her reply was that unfortunately no, no new series - but she thought the series just ended would be repeated in the not-too-distant future. She confirmed that the shows had indeed rate very highly in listener research and had been well-received indeed.

NO DOUBT I'M ASKING FOR TROUBLE WITH THIS - BUT IF ANY MEMBER IS A KEEN PHILATELIST I ACCUMULATE A FAIR NUMBER OF FOREIGN STAMPS WHICH I DO NOT COLLECT.....They can have them - stamp collectors that is - for a medium sized envelope with, say, 13½p stamp on it.....



JUST A PICTURE.....

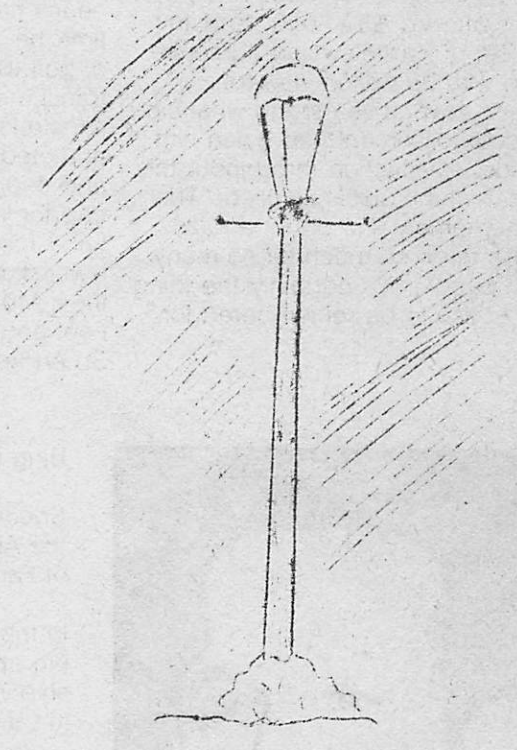
Just a picture, in a frame,
Of a guy with a strange, odd, name.
An ordinary fella, in casual gear,
And his old felt hat pushed to the rear.

Just a bloke who rolled his hips,
A song forever on his lips,
Pipe in mouth, as yet unlit -
Looking as tho' he don't care a bit!

A happy chappie - fond of 'golf'
And all agree, he was a 'toff'
Just a picture in a frame...
We'll never see his like again!

(Who else?)

Norman Toogood.



B I N G C R O S B Y

Golf was such a vital element of Bing Crosby's life that he once declared, "You know, hardly a day goes by that I'm not playing, thinking or talking golf." How appropriate it is that he is being inducted into the All-American Golf Hall of Fame.

Crosby was also an American institution, loved and admired the world over. The rich baritone voice that sold over 300 million records, the 52 movies in which he starred, his old radio shows that entertained a nation, and his relaxed, easy-going manner were all part of the Crosby legend. In the words of his dear friend Bob Hope, "Bing was the guy that everyone else wanted to be."

Crosby's most visible contribution to golf is, of course, the Bing Crosby National Pro-Am, the PGA Tour event held each winter on the Monterey Peninsula at Pebble Beach, Cypress Point and Spyglass Hill. Bing started it back in 1937 at Rancho Santa Fe near San Diego as a weekend party for a few touring pros and his friends in show business. The first Crosby offered a purse of $3,000. This past year it offered $300,000, and in 1978 set a golf television audience record with 35 million viewers.

Asked several years ago what single accomplishment had given him the most satisfaction throughout this long career, he quickly replied, "The golf tournament. No doubt about that. It's done so much for so many needy people. It's certainly the thing I'd most like to be remembered for."

The tournament has raised over $3 million for charities which include the Bing Crosby Youth Fund and a student loan program at 100 small colleges throughout the country.

Crosby and Hope generated additional millions in defense bond sales with their memorable Victory Caravan tours during World War II, tours that took them to major cities and remote hamlets across nation. Golf was an integral part of those appearances, one round drawing over 28,000 fans at Tam O'Shanter in Chicago.

Bing was in the public's eye for nearly half a century, and for all that time he was a vigorous promoter of golf. But his love of the game transcended his frequent role as a minstrel. He was hopelessly addicted to golf. He played with skill and dedication, carrying a 2-handicap for years. Five times he won the Lakeside Club championship in Hollywood, in addition to competing in the 1940 U.S. Amateur at Winged Foot and the 1950 British Amateur at St. Andrews.

When filming his pictures for Paramount, he would often rise early to get in 18 holes of golf at Wilshire Country Club before reporting to the studio at 9 a.m. During breaks in the shooting he would scurry over to Wilshire to hit balls until summoned back to work.

"I've never known a man more hooked on the game," says Bob Hope. "Bing took it seriously, but he enjoyed it enormously. He worked on his game like a professional. He loved to watch kids play golf. I know he got a lot of satisfaction watching his youngest boy, Nathaniel, develop into a scratch player."

Nathaniel, now a college golfer in Florida, assumed the chairmanship of the Crosby tournament shortly after Bing died, at age 73, on October 14, 1977, while playing golf in Spain.

In one of the last years of his life, Bing and sons Harry and Nathaniel played all the great courses in Scotland. "It was great fun for the boys," Bing said, "and for me, too. It was a summer we'll always remember."

So it is fitting indeed that Bing Crosby be inducted into the All-American Collegiate Golf Hall of Fame. His warm spirit is still very much with us. He is missed terribly, by everyone whose lives he touched in some way, but especially by golfers, who understood the love and dedication he had for their game.

Bing Crosby

Special Posthumous Inductee into the All-American Collegiate Golf Hall of Fame

In tribute to his unfailing humanitarian spirit and distinguished leadership in inaugurating and sponsoring the Bing Crosby Pro-Am Tournament.

IN MEMORIAM

MR. HERB BOOTMAN (USA)

We were greatly shocked and saddened to receive the following from Al Sutton in the States:

> It is the unpleasant mission of this letter to tell you of the death of Herb Bootman, long-time member of Club Crosby. Herb hadn't been feeling too well for a short time, having had a touch of 'flu but he seemed to be on the mend. Last Sunday (early August) his wife went to bed leaving Herb happily in front of the television set, telling his wife he would be along later. Awakening early Monday, Bobbie found that Herb hadn't yet come to bed and when she went to waken him, Herb was gone - in his sleep and apparently with no warning or pain.
>
> All who have known Herb Bootman have been fortunate to know a really happy man - happy with his family, with multitudes of friends - happy with his retirement to which he was just adjusting, happy with his Crosby collecting and with his new love - video cassette recording. His collection of Bing movies by this means had grown to enviable size.
>
> Helpful, friendly, always smiling; full of enthusiasm for life and its challenges, respected by acquaintances, loved by friends.
>
> Another good man gone, and there weren't enough to start with...

Editor: We had known Herb for years as a keen member of the ICC and, at this distance, we can endorse what Al Sutton wrote. Herb's death must have come as a particular and poignant shock to many here who had only recently met Herb on visits to the States. Mary Throp especially, found the news grievous indeed for in her lengthy visit to America last May she stayed and travelled around with Herb and his wife Bobbie. A Bing man all his life, Herb Bootman had just begun a more tangible role in organised Crosbyana becoming vice-President of BINGANG in its recent reorganisation.
We wrote to Mrs. Bootman on receiving the news to which we had the following reply:

> "...our lives were enriched by our contact with so many members of the world of Crosbyana. Please express my thanks to all the members of the International Crosby Circle...such letters as yours help more than you know."
>
> BOBBIE BOOTMAN.

MR. AL FARROW (Hull)

It was equally distressing to receive the news that Alf Farrow died on October 3rd - just five days after the Leeds dinner, at which affairs Alf - excepting this year - had been such a regular attender with his Hull colleagues, making a most enthusiastic band of visitors from Humberside. It comes to me now how upset Alf was when Hull was removed from Yorkshire (East) in the county-shake-up and placed in Humberside!

His close friend, FRANK BRIGGS, writes:

> I telephoned Alf on the Monday after the Leeds dinner to tell him all about it but sadly Alf was too short of breath to carry on a conversation. He had been suffering with his chest for some time and recently

had got a lot worse. He was having to sleep downstairs. Shortly after I spoke to him he was taken into the cardiac unit of the local hospital where he passed away. I have lost a great pal. We all have, Reg..... I went to the funeral service with Bill Warley, our other Hull colleague... It was many years ago that I first met Alf and we've had a fine friendship, meeting regularly to talk about and listen to Bing.....A great pal gone.

Editor: At Leeds, so automatically did I look for Frank Briggs, Alf Farrow and Bill Warley, that I felt constrained to ask Frank where was Alf? He told me he wasn't well but I had no idea at all that Alf was grievously ill. I first met him - at Leeds - many years ago and always looked forward to seeing him, briefly as it always was. Alf, you may like to know, was one Circle member who had been active before the Second World War in organising a Crosby club here in Britain.

A letter from Alf was always a delight - good-humoured, sometimes correcting without any shade of malice, always enthusiastic. His love of matters Bing never even looked liked waning all through the years.

Another grievous loss. Our deepest condolences to his wife and family. I understand Alf was 67.

The best-laid plans go awry, do they not? The sort of news we hate to print in any issue, leave alone the Christmas issue. Truly in life.....

****

LET'S PROVE IT! writes TREVOR WAGSTAFFE (Hornchurch)

I very much liked the blow-up in the last issue of Bing's last interview: "MY LOYAL BRITISH FANS - THE GREATEST!" I think we should endeavour to live up to that description - by sending in regular requests for Bing records to be played - BBC and local radio. Anything to keep Bing's voice regularly reaching the people. Ask for them for birthdays, wedding anniversaries - for fellow members! Keep the ball rolling - or the pot boiling! I think it most important that the presenters - deejays if you must! - be kept aware that we don't all want Abba, Led Zeppelin, and the Sex Pistols. And no excuse will be needed to get WHITE CHRISTMAS and SILENT NIGHT regularly on the air these weeks!

I was certainly among those members who appreciated Pat Forster's efforts in obtaining the exact wording of the address of welcome to Bing by the Chairman of the Greater London Council. Having photos of the scroll being presented I have always wondered precisely what the scroll said. Now we know; and most fitting.

Also it was good to read the Homily delivered by Bishop McCarrick in New York by courtesy of Mr. Justice Francis X. Smith.

Editor: Needless to say, we fully endorse Trevor's ideas for keeping Bing records on the air. Give 'em an avalanche of mail insisting that Christmas just isn't Christmas until you've heard - whatever record you want!

****

PROMPT REMITTANCE OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION WHEN THE "X" APPEARS IN YOUR COPY OF "BING" IS OF GREAT ASSISTANCE IN KEEPING THINGS GOING. AND IF YOU CAN INTRODUCE A NEW MEMBER INSTEAD OF LETTING HIM/HER SEE YOUR COPY FOR FREE - SO MUCH THE BETTER !

****

A CHRISTMAS CROSBY QUIZ

The idea is that you are facing a quiz-master and, cannot, therefore, dive for the records or books! You should answer - if you can - straight off the-cuff as they say. Answers further on in this issue.

1. Name at least ten of the twelve tracks on the No. 1 Christmas album, MERRY CHRISTMAS (LAT8556).

2. How many tracks on that album also featured The Andrews Sisters?

3. Name three vocal accompanying units.

4. IF ONLY IN MY DREAMS is the sub-title of one of the songs; what is the first title?

5. Apart from The Andrews Sisters, just one female singer was featured with Bing on this same album; what was the title and what was her name?

6. What was the name of the little girl who wrote a letter to Bing featured on the CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD album and from whence did she come?

7. On this AROUND THE WORLD ALBUM (MUP 329) which has been reissued more than once, there is an ENGLISH item. What was it - and who took part?

8. Same album - what did THE VATICAN CHOIR sing?

9. On which album does THE LITTLEST ANGEL appear?

10. Who, according to the label, produced A CHRISTMAS TOAST album (also issued as A TIME TO BE JOLLY)?

11. On the Warner (WM8136) album there is a song, subsequently sung by Bing on his very last Christmas TV show with a British performer. Who was this performer (male) and what was the song?

12. Radio and TV are virtually 100 per cent 'commercial' in America - like out ITV. Thus Bing had many 'sponsors' as they were called on US radio. Name at least four of these sponsors.

13. Bing sang on ITV in Britain (tho' did not appear) for a product. What was this product and when, within a year either way, did it occur?

14. "Jack Kapp had a lot of trouble talking me into recording --------. Being only a crooner, I felt that I didn't have sufficient stature as a singer to sing a song with religious implications, but Jack insisted that through the years (thissong) had virtually become a Christmas carol. So I recorded it. I'm glad I did." vide Bing in CALL ME LUCKY. What was the song?

15. Be careful with No. 14. There was another Christmas song Bing objected to - but brother Larry came up with a suggestion to which Bing agreed, and recorded the song. What was THAT?

16. Name at least five famous radio acts that appeared with Bing in THE BIG BROADCAST (1932)

GETTING INVOLVED - with BING --- Of course, we're all involved with Bing - or we wouldn't be reading these pages; but some members find themselves getting caught up in a variety of ways in this involvement.

ROY CHAPPELL, for instance, our singer WITH A TOUCH OF THE BINGS...both before and after his smash success in America gave two most interesting broadcasts over Radio Manchester. The interviewer did his best to let down the side though; Roy sang - in great style - I HAD THE CRAZIEST DREAM and this interviewer then said: "I defy anyone - ANYONE - to say that was not Bing Crosby singing...but it wasn't..it was our own Manchester ROY CHAPPELL..." Roy was very quick to deny such a rash statement and went on to speak - and sing - most charmingly of his activities, especially those in America last May and his momentous meeting with Bing in Manchester, when Bing warmly commended Roy's efforts.

Our delightful friend - everybody's friend! - ENA HOOLEY, found herself actually opening the Rose Garden (about which you read a few issues back) down in Lynmouth, developed by a remarkable gentleman, REG JACOBS, in honour of Bing's memory. Not only that - she was seen on WESTWARD TELEVISION doing the job in gracious style. Earlier on it was expected that Kathryn Crosby would grace the opening with her presence, but time has come and gone. Certainly it was most fitting that Ena performed the ceremony. She had a lot to do with the setting up of the garden for Bing.

STAN AUSTIN of West Drayton did his BING CROSBY TRIBUTE again around Oct. 14 on the hospitals' network in Middlesex - doing his usual fine job. And Mr. W.H.Ewart of Ferndown, Dorset, also did a fine tribute to Bing to six hospitals in the Bournemouth area on the same day under the auspices of the Bournemouth and East Dorset Hospital Broadcasting Association. This too appears a particularly interesting broadcast for it began with Bing's first solo on the air - and concluded with J.J.Barrie's GOODBYE, BING. Its a pity this last-named song didn't get much prominence for it wasn't at all a bad effort. Mr. Ewart's selection made a point of involving so many of the well-known stars that appeared on record with Bing. We're suit it was well-appreciated. Dick Nettleton (ordered to retire by his doctor, welcome to the club!) does a nice comfy programme on Radio Oxford. Then we received a most original and unique tape - not broadcast, alas! - from Harry Mainwaring of the Wirral. Original is hardly the name for it! It was the story of Bing's life as discussed between two characters - in Scouse dialect! Harry did both voices and in fact added a few nifty though unaccompanied songs in which he did a real Bing job! Would be interesting to hear him with a band - but he stoutly maintains he's no professional!

DR. GERALD DAVIES of Penn, Wolverhampton, sent us his DOCTOR'S LULLABY, at last orchestrated and thus heard as the 'finished product'. Very nice too, and aptly described. (We reported the Dr's effort also a few issues back).

PETER DIFFLEY of Stockport worked hard to get a stock of Larry Zwisohn's book A LIFETIME OF MUSIC but finally had to give up when Larry took the view that a bulk supply to the UK was uneconomic. Still, it seems members CAN get it from Larry themselves (and its worth it) by sending 13.45 dollars for airmail postage, OR 10.45 dollars for surface despatch (around 3 months' delay). With the dollar at around 2½ to the £ its not a bad deal. Say £4.50 for surface or £5.60 for airmail. It IS a good book (see last page of this issue). Larry's address: 233 S. Barrington Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90049, USA.

Then there is the member who would prefer, no doubt, to remain nameless who actually TAPES the entire contents of BING for a sightless member; a really tremendous thing..and the couple who wrote regretting they hadn't been in touch lately: their bird-work was keeping them at full stretch! Seems they have gained a reputation for tending sick/injured birds and now get them brought in from near and far....again, tremendous. And so many members bearing sickness, bereavement, ill-health - our thoughts are with you. A New Year is on the threshold: we hope it will be a better one for all.

TRADING POST

This is the feature of BING wherein you may advertise your wants & disposals - records, tapes, pictures. This is a service, of course, for members of the Circle and there is no charge for insertions here. Please keep your advertisements to a maximum of six lines; if you have lengthy lists of items invite a SAE for lists. And writing your ads. on a separate sheet of paper is helpful and goes a long way to ensuring insertion.

A slightly unexpected development has been that non-Crosby advertisements are turning up! We might have expected this - but didn't! On the other hand, we appreciate that members have other interests apart from Mr. C. The facility will not be denied to such advertisements but bearing in mind that this magazine exists primarily for Bing, for non-Crosby advertisements there will, from the next issue, be a nominal charge of £1.00 per entry.

We've been informed by the publishers that the discount price for ICC members for Ken Barnes's THE CROSBY YEARS will now be £8.95p, i.e. based on the full price of the book which is now £9.95p Will late-comers please note this; it is understood most readers have the book - with a £2.00 discount on the shop price! The price includes P & P still, however.

Bing ties with the well-known silhouette motif in blue or maroon (tie colour) are available from:

BAXTER'S
THE BADGE CENTRE
45 ROPERGATE,
PONTEFRACT, W. YORKS

Price per tie is £2.10p + 15. p & P

MRS. RENEE CHESTER, 48 Milton Rd., Hanwell, London, W.7. is most interested in video-cassettes; and is particularly keen to contact anyone who can convert US types to British. Renee also has a large selection of sound-cassettes she is willing to copy. Write, with SAE, stating your requirements. It is,of course, Bing video which is Renee's interest.

AMERICAN READERS WILL BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT "THE CROSBY YEARS" IS ABOUT TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE STATES.

BOB JONES, 39 Gladstone St. Hebburn Tyne & Wear WANTS! Bing LPS, EPS, and singles. Will buy or exchange; and would like radio broadcasts of Al Bowlly. (Do any exist? - Ed.)

MISS OLIVE GREGORY, "Ebenezer", 4 Lyndhurst Rd. Meols, Hoylake, L47 7BP has the READERS DIGEST 6-LP boxed set plus the bonus record, entitled THE GLENN MILLER YEARS. Mint condition; 82 tracks in all - 15 of Glenn Miller, rest by Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey, Guy Lombardo, Xavier Cugat, etc. etc. Would exchange for Bing material on tape or disc - OR SELL.

Cassettes which "fast rewind or wind" sluggishly will almost certainly speed up if given a sharp edge-on tape on a table or such. Remember to wind past the "leader" tape so that you are on recording tape when recording. And ALWAYS watch the recording level; although undesirable, under-recording is better than over-recording. This refers to the VOLUME, of course - and the usual indication is the needle on the meter 'going into the Red' and staying there. That way you will be over-recording and the result is unacceptable distortion. The needle should hover short of the Red area.

ICC publications, in addition to that concerned with the order-form with this issue, available:
THE BING CROSBY DISCOGRAPHY £2.00
THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY £2.00
and THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY - the analysis of different 'takes' issued on Bing's records: £2.50p.
All prices post & packing paid.

The V-DISC listing WILL be published but has been postponed for the time being in favour of other projects.

IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO FAST WIND & RE-WIND NEW TAPES BEFORE RECORDING ON THEM.

JOHN PARKS, "Norville" Shepherds Close, Odstock, Salisbury, Wilts has about 170 Bing 78s to dispose of

EDW. STURRUP, 3 Griffin Way, Sunbury on Thames, Midd'x wants:
Reprise: SOUTH PACIFIC
" GUYS & DOLLS
" THE SUMMIT
also the DORIS DAY Christmas album and soundtracks from JANE EYRE and THE SANDPIPER.

VIC BYNE, 28 Upton Rd., Slough, Berks: WANTED: Musical soundtracks of MISSISSIPPI - RHYTHM ON THE RANGE PENNIES FROM HEAVEN - WAIKIKI WEDDING - DOUBLE OR NOTHING - DR.RHYTHM SING YOU SINNERS - PARIS HONEYMOON

BARRY HOLLOWDAY, 6 Heo Green, Wick, Littlehampton, Sussex BN17 7 JB would much like to hear from anyone who has the Bing radio show with LINDA DARNELL as the guest; also anyone who can offer SLEIGH RIDE IN JULY (Bing).

ERNEST TURNER, 19 Princeway, Frodsham, Warrington, WA6 6RX requires cassettes of the TV shows THIS IS TOM JONES; also any early Jo Stafford material on cassette.

JIM REILLY, 100 Brettenham Rd., Walthamstow, London, E17 5BA very much wants a copy of THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD by Fred Reynolds &c. Will pay any reasonable price.

A. TRIMBLE, 64 Birchwood Rd., Moorclose, Middleton, Manchester wants Bing's narration/singing in SLEEPY HOLLOW if anyone can help please?

LEN HAWKINGS, 18 Sturdon Rd., Ashton Bristol BS3 2BA has THE BING CROSBY SHOW with F. Sinatra as guest (new) and WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS (RCA LSA3094) as new. Offers OR exchanges.
(Les and his wife would also like to thank Phil Clarke & his members for their hospitality - Ed.)

TERRY WARDROPE, 44 Melloch Crescent, Tillicoultry, FK13 6QJ has spares of: HEY JUDE (SHU8391: RENDEZVOUS (INTS 1047): WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING (LAT8278): MANY HAPPY RETURNS(VLP1) GOLDEN FAVOURITES (52.023) BING CROSBY'S GREATEST HITS (MCA 3031) which he would like to exchange for other LPs. Anything considered.

BILL MOLYNEUX, 39 Bebington Rd., Great Sutton, South Wirral, L66 4RS has about 50 78's of Bing; prepared to swop - or sell for about £1 each. Also have about 1500 78s of all types to sell or swop.

We're mildly surprised that no-one appears to want the two copies of BING CROSBY'S GREATEST HITS(MCA3031): 1. White Christmas. 2. Whiffenpoof Song 3. I Surrender dear 4. Blue Skies. 5. Pistol Packin' Momma 6.Too-Ra-Loo-Ra 1. Ac-cent-uate the Positive 2. Don't Fence me in 3, You are my sunshine 4. Swinging on a Star 5. Deep in the Heart of Texas. They are now offered at £3.50 P & P Paid - those who have heard this particular album claim it is the best transfer of 78s they've heard.

Nor does anyone appear to want the HEY JUDE-HEY BING - 1. Hey Jude, 2. Little Green Apples 3. Livin' on Lovin' 4. Just for Tonight 5. Lonely Street 6. The Straight Life 7. Its all in the Game 8. Those were the days. This is offered now at £3.00 P & P paid.

More understandable is the lack of demand for spare copies of SEASONS: £3.00 P & P paid.

We have just one copy of LADIES OF BURLESQUE; 29 tracks of Marilyn Monroe, Alice Faye, Ann Sothern, Virginia O'Brien, Barbara Stanwyck, Betty Grable, Shelley Winters, Jane Wyman, Ann Sheridan, Joanne Woodward and others, with songs from films. Price £3.00 post paid.

Dozens of Bing LPs for disposal. Will sell or swop for original cast recordings. Also many other artists including Jolson, Como, Haymes, Mercer, Sinatra, bands &c. For lists of 100's of titles send SAE to T. WARDROPE, 44 Melloch Cres., Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire FK13 6QJ

MR. W.H.Ewert, "Wood Nymph", 7 Elfin Drive, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 9QG would be interested to hear from any member who has a good quality recording of the recent Parkinson/Bob Hope intervie Quality must be good.

In addition to the records mentioned above, THE EDITOR has a spare copy of BING CROSBY: A LEGENDARY PERFORMER (RCA) unplayed and complete with booklet and frameable picture. £4.00 post paid.

****

BINGING AROUND

On a recent visit to London, writes a member, I was shattered to discover that Chappells, in New Bond St., had disposed of their vast record emporium - one that used to rival the HMV Shop in Oxford St. And above which, of course, Bing recorded some of his London records. A devastating sign of the times in the record industry.....

ROY MITCHELL (Swindon) writes: We've all seen Bing's magic at work but one example sticks in my mind. Back in 1942 I was in the RAF stationed at a small airfield with only about 20 airmen. Off duty I used to play a wind-up gramophone fitted with a pick-up for playing thro' a radio. I only had Bing records, brought ffom home and these included such favourites as STARDUST, MEXICALI ROSE, EMPTY SADDLES &c Everyone in the billet appreciated these - except one chap who came from North Wales. When I first started playing the records he surlily remarked: "That's not singing!" But I didn't let him deter me and continued playing them, every day. After about a month this chap suddenly came out with: "He doesn't sing so bad mun, does he?" He came to really enjoy them. Indeed, he used to 'request' what became his favourites, and if I had neglected the gramophone he would say: "Put Bing on then!" Often wondered how strong a Bing-man he became. Perhaps he's a member!

IF YOU WANT TO MEET KINDRED SPIRITS AND ENJOY SOCIAL EVENINGS OF RECORDS, FILMS, VIDEO perhaps the following will be of interest:

PHIL CLARKE, 69 Walden Rd., Stamshaw, Portsmouth runs the Southern Society and offers fine evenings out.....Jim Newell, 17 Edwina Close, Bitterne, and Norman Toogood (our Bing-Laureate) 91 Chiltern Green, Millbrook Est., both of Southampton, while enjoying Phil's events are also arranging similar things for Southampton area members.....in the Midlands, Tom Evans, 84 Brereton Rd., New Invention, Willenhall with helpers holds functions in the Midlands.....while up in the North East, John Joyce and Bob Jones organise equally splendid events in the Gateshead/Newcastle area - John is at 21 Birchfield Gdns., Gateshead, Bob at 39 Gladstone St., Hebburn, Tyne & Wear... Mrs. Renee Chester, 48 Milton Rd., Hanwell, London, W7, though not organising events, is always delighted to see Bing visitors to London..... while if you are in Hove, Tony Carpenter is in charge of The Captains Table, (restaurant) in 83 Lustrells Vale - oh, Saltdean, it is! Not Hove....

Another correspondent... "I cannot help thinking how significant it must be that, as you grow older, you alter your mind about so many things. There are not many things about my youth that I agree with today. When I was a boy I thought as a boy, but when I became a man etc. etc. as the Bible says. Yet, I have never altered in the slightest in my attitude to Bing Crosby. His voice, his personality, remain as attractive and compelling as when I first became aware of him, close on 50 years ago....I suppose many will aver similar sentiments.

BERNARD J. DENHAM, 795 Greer Rd., Palo Alto, California 94303 USA: You all continue to publish the best magazine on Bing, and it strikes me that a selection of some of the more substantive articles from the years of the magazine would make a really good book as a kind of 'background' or 'handbook' to Bing's life and varied career. That is, not the standard chronological biography or life, but a number of articles or essays giving information on or illuminating aspects of Bing's recordings, films, radio shows &c. You certainly have the experts over the years writing for BING and I am sure they would give their approvals. I believe a soft-cover - with a good colour photo back and front - publication at the magazine size with about 250 pages might sell well to Bing enthusiasts and others interested in the classic period of American popular music; especially now that period appears to be over.

Editor: Thanks Bernard - for a spanking idea we will work on; and also the valued estimation of our efforts in BING.

BING REMEMBERED —

CHRISTMASSES OF LONG AGO in an article published in 1976....

At Christmas, Mother ran things. I remember the whole wonderfully exciting rigmarole used to start about two weeks before the great day...the first I'd notice would be the mouth-watering smells coming from the kitchen.

There was no pocket-money doled out in the Crosby house. It didn't seem hard. Christmas was a very happy time and you just had to work a little harder to get the money to buy presents....I used to earn my cents by doing a variety of chores — chopping wood or clearing snow for neighbours.

Christmas trees were never any problem. The whole countryside around Spokane was thick with forests of pine and spruce. My brothers and I used to go to the forest a short distance away and pick up a nice spruce that wasn't too tall to get into our living-room. Then when he got back home we'd have to put up with the hollering from Mother about not messing up the place.....the decorations were kept in a cardboard box and came out every year. They weren't plastic like today but a kind of shiny, painted, glass and each one was separately stored in cotton wool.....

Around 11.30pm you'd see the whole Crosby family emerge from 508 Sharp Avenue. And led by Mother we would trudge over the snow to the Jesuit church just a block and a half away. We all sang in the choir. When we got back home again each of us chased off to our secret hiding-places to retrieve our presents then, one by one, we placed them under the tree....

Mother would have the meal all laid out. Nice and pretty. There'd be logs in the grate - and a red-hot poker ready to warm the red wine — even as children we were allowed to have a glass on Christmas Day.... The turkey, when we could afford one, would be carried in should-high on a large platter and we'd all give a cheer, say Grace and all tuck in.

After the dishes were washed up and put away we'd gather round the piano to sing carols. That piano was famous in the family - Dad had gone into hock to buy it! My sisters took turns to play. Dad plinked away on a mandolin and he and Mother led the singing.....Adeste Fidelis, God rest ye merry, gentlemen, and so on - very much the same as my own family does today.....now we gather at our house in San Francisco. Sometimes, with all the children, grandchildren, aunties and uncles, we have a party of over 60.....Right up to the end Mother used to come. Just occasionally we'd stand by the window, Mother and I, and look out over the green lawns of Beverly Hills where we used to live, and we'd agree:

Christmas with the family was marvellous anywhere...but when you came down to it, we did miss the snow, the white Christmasses we used to know..

****

Ah, Christmasses in the early years of the century...Bing's Chrissmasses until he left home....seems he was destined, if totally unaware of it, to add a new dimension to Yuletide.....Do the <u>old</u> Christmasses always seem better? I must confess that now, after all these years, it is difficult to remember a Christmas when Bing wasn't present - and going a long way to making it what it was.....and is.

HOW THE VOICE CHANGED - or did it?

BY JOHN BIGNELL

> Not the sort of article really suitable for a Christmas issue for it is a recurring subject that gets some people foaming at the mouth - in disagreement! Still, let's have John's view.....

Within the space of a couple of weeks recently two very good friends of mine - not known to each other - made statements which were, on the face of it, at opposite ends of the spectrum. One opined that Bing's voice began to deteriorate in 1935; and the other (no doubt after playing the splendid FEELS GOOD, FEELS RIGHT album) confessed to a strong feeling that some of Bing's work during the historic period 1975-77 was among his best-ever recording.

The other thing which got me thinking was the recent purchase of an album of Anne Shelton on the Decca label singing hits of the 1940-46 period, i.e. virtually from the beginning of her career. There's no doubt that Anne's voice has changed very little in 40 years. This lady, who has rightly been called one of our very best all-time vocalists, seemed to have that deep contralto maturity right from her first recordings with Ambrose in 1940. Other singers whose vocal range and quality seemed to remain more or less the same over a long period include, in my view, Dinah Shore, Lee Wiley, Dick Todd, Michael Holiday and Al Bowlly.

Others, like Billie Holliday, Frank Sinatra, reached early peaks and then declined quite alarmingly. Yet another category includes the splendid Peggy Lee who, starting as a band-singer with Benny Goodman, seemed in her early recordings to be slightly imitative of Dinah Shore and did not develop her own inimitable and husky-voiced style for several years.

Bing, his own man as in everything else, was in a different category to all these. His early vocals with Paul Whiteman 1927-30 showed the merest signs of the greatness which was to burst forth in 1931. There followed the halcyon period of vintage Crosby which, again in my view, lasted right through the 1930's and into the early War years. In all that time there was an imperceptible change in the voice, not apparent from year to year but only if one plays, for instance, the 1931 version of WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS and follow it immediately with the 1939 version. At this juncture I should repeat what I have said on a previous occasion - that there's no evidence on record of the sudden, dramatic change in Bing's voice after the 'nodes on the vocal chords' syndrome which allegedly took place in 1931. There was a gradual, even fascinating change during these years only to be appreciated by playing recordings several years apart to get the full impact. Indisputably, the soaring, full-throated glorious voice of 1933 had gone by 1939, BUT it had been replaced by a smoother, technically more polished and still unique and beautiful voice. In fact, I have learned there is a large Crosby following which would quite unhesitatingly pick the years 1938-32 as his really peak years.

I can see merit in this belief when I listen to such numbers as IF I KNEW THEN, MY HEART IS TAKING LESSONS, IDA, SWEET AS APPLE CIDER, MARCHETA, RIDIN' DOWN THE CANYON. At the same time one is aware that the dramatic impact of the 1933-36 era with LEARN TO CROON, MAY I? DOWN BY THE RIVER and SO DO I was gone for ever.

But the first real signs of a lesser voice, as opposed to a changed one, came during the later War years, 1944-45, with what I would offer as one or two sub-standard recordings, such as WE'LL GATHER LILACS, and on to 1949 with the abysmal AMONG MY SOUVENIRS. Incidentally, I

must mention the 1946 recording of SUNNYSIDE OF THE STREET which I rate as one of Bing's poorest recordings. And yet, astonishingly Bing interspersed these untypical efforts with real beauties like YOU BELONG TO MY HEART, SIOUX CITY SUE, KENTUCKY BABE and RIDERS IN THE SKY.

Any fears that some of the less memorable efforts of the second half of the 1940's heralded a permanent decline, were quite miraculously dispelled in the decade which followed. It was a momentous decade for the popular music industry with the onset of trends which have continued to the present day and details of which need not concern us here. Bing not only survived the phenomenon of 'Rock' and its successors but set new standards of singing - and song interpretation. From CHATTANOOGIE SHOE SHINE BOY in 1950 to I COULDN'T CARE LESS in 1959, it was a joyful, jestful and fruitful decade of Crosby singing. The full repertoire of these years is still to be released and Ken Barnes for one would stoutly defend the motion that Bing was at his inimitable best during this period.

The decade which followed gave us further proof of Bing's supremacy as an enduring singer with splendid albums such as HOLIDAY IN EUROPE, RETURN TO PARADISE ISLANDS, THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS and TRAVELLIN' TWO-BEAT. Again, the voice gradually lost a little in quality but to be able to produce such a varied repertoire as the foregoing albums offer it had to be still a remarkable voice.

The astonishing story of the 1970's is fresh enough to need no repeating here. After a quiet start the decade exploded into life with some of Bing's most historic and poignantly memorable vocalising, culminating in the proliferation of albums and the epic Palladium shows of 1976 and 1977. Besides Bing, I have a wide and varied collection of some of the greatest popular singers of the century but I have no evidence of anyone being able to sing as Bing sang at the age of 74.

I offer the thought that if you compare Bing's voice in the period 1975-77 with that of 10 years earlier it did not deteriorate at all. On the Palladium 'live' album his singing of GONE FISHIN' with Ted Rogers compares very, very favourably with his 1951 version with Satchmo. The same can be said of IN A LITTLE SPANISH TOWN whilst on the SOUTHERN MEMOIR album his ALABAMY BOUND offers a contrasting version to the 1957 effort with Buddy Cole byt the 1975 offering suffers not in comparison.

Which leaves me agreeing and disagreeing with my two friends. Certainly the period 1933-35 produced singing which surpassed anything anyone had done before - or since, BUT the voice which continued to amaze and delight millions for a further 42 years was still powerful and charismatic enough in 1977 to pack the Palladium for two solid weeks - as it did the year before.

In conclusion, its superfluous to add that the voice of Bing means to everyone just what they get out of it - whether you be a 1930's buff or one of the newer fellas or gals who prefer the last 20 years. Or even if (like me) you continue to obtain immense pleasure from much of his working during the whole 51 years recording career. The old truism remains exactly that. Crosby fans are the luckiest in the world.

Editor: Very astute of John to take out an insurance policy in his final paragraph! I suppose an Editor should sit back placidly and remain neutral and leave it to members to argue it out. But I don't see why I should be de-barred.....to me, it is all delightfully simple. Of course Bing's voice changed - what man of 74 sings like a man of 26 or 27? To paraphrase something we have used elsewhere in this issue oddly enough, when Bing was a young man

he sang as a young man; when he became a middle-aged man, he sang as a mature man. When he became an old man - he still sang as a mature man! And a thought for those who dismiss the early 30's: If Bing hadn't been the complete, startlingly refreshing, revolutionary interpreter of popular songs in the early 30's it is safe to say we shouldn't be enthusiastically analysing his voice 50 years later.

And I feel another factor comes into it: an important factor. Clearly Bing changed into a smooth, highly professional performer/singer. The reason must have been mainly that, after say 1935, he knew - perhaps sub-consciously - that he had to strive no longer. Whatever he did wqs overwhelmingly successful. So much so that it bewildered him. I am not for one moment suggesting that Bing ceased to 'try' - far from it. But I used the word 'subconsciously' and I'm certain that Bing came to a smoother, more mature, less revolutionary perhaps style becau:e of the self-assurance his success engendered. He didn't become smug or over-confident. Just assured.

Many times I've heard AMONG MY SOUVENIRS castigated as John castigated - and frankly, I cannot see (or hear) it. I'll agree Bing made some uninteresting - dull if you like - records, and WE'LL GATHER LILACS was among them. But listening carefully to them, and seeking a reason, I feel it was the arrangement that dulled Bing! Hate saying that about any of Bing's MD's but I feel it to be true. Remember, Bing was going into the recording studio so unbelievably regularly that there must have been times when he didn't really feel like it; perhaps he had a bit of a cold....perhaps he didn't like the songs he was due to record; he may have, on occasion, been worried about extraneous matters - his family, films, business. The miracle is the relative consistency he did maintain over all those years.

I'm afraid I can in no way support the belief that the 1950's, Buddy Cole and all that, were Bing even nearly at his best. There are some good items among them for sure, but mainly they sound what they were... casually tossed off 'choruses' (seldom more) in almost singalong fashion, to be put 'on the shelf' and slotted into radio shows as and when required. Bing himself never even heard them! He told Les Gaylor so. And even with the incredible grafting job of Ken Barnes/Pete Moore - that's still how they sound - to me. In fact, the best of these off-hand tracks were those issued on the NEW TRICKS album....

Well, I reckon between us - John Bignell and I - we've stirred a lot of members into reaching for their pens! Which is good Crosbyana.....

(REV) MICHAEL COLLINS writes: Your inclusion some issues back of a rhyming couplet by Sir John Betjeman containing a reference to Bing, prompts me to send you another, albeit very fleeting, from a much more celebrated poem by a contemporary of the Poet Laureate, Louis MacNeice. I refer to AUTUMN JOURNAL:

> Sleep quietly, Marx and Freud,
> The figure-heads of our transition,
> Cagney, Lombard, Bing and Garbo,
> Sleep in your world of celluloid
> Cante XXIV
> (AUTUMN JOURNAL 1939)

More interestingly, it would appear that Philip Larkin was first inspired to write poetry on hearing Bing sing - of all things - LOVE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. What apparently caught his fancy was the 'bridge' passage:

> Venus de Milo was noted for her chamrs,
> But strictly between us,
> You're cuter than Venus -
> And shat's more you've got arms!

This recondite little item of information was mentioned by Anthony Burgess in the first of the 1980 T. E. Eliot Memorial Lectures given at the University of Kent at Canterbury and broadcast on Radio 3 on

September 29.

> Editor: Nice to know Michael! While I've never been inspired to poetry because of them, a lot of Bing's lyrics (and this is a good example) were exceedingly clever, I always thought. I love the line "...I'm so afraid you might escape from me and yet...I can't escape from you." There's another gem that refers to love being 'elastic' - please stretch a point with me!

If we might slip back to John Bignell's article above, wherein he mentioned many other singers, RON NEWTON, of Telford raised an intriguing point. He wrote:

There is something I've been meaning to ask you - I've never seen any film, or heard any record or even radio show where Bing had been involved with Doris Day. If there are any around I've missed out. They would have made a super pair in song. Both had such clear diction.

> Editor: Well, that IS a good point. I have no trace of Bing with Doris Day though that should not be taken as the last word! It is a notable omission if Bing did NOT sing with Doris Day.

Straying from TRADING POST, BRIAN JONES, 23 Plas Rd., Fleur-de-Lis, Pengam, Gwent has 45 Bing LPs to clear at an average price of £2.50 each. Send SAE for list.

GETTING INVOLVED - with BING! LIONEL PAIRPOINT has given me what he rightly describes as THE ONLY COPY IN THE WORLD of an amazingly detailed resume of Bing's PHILCO broadcasts. It runs to around 144 pages, would you believe. We feel this should be our next publication but feel also that it may be best to publish it in two parts, as it is so bulky. Lionel is the chap who once casually informed me that he was "busy of late trying to turn his modest house into the Taj Mahal with the aid of hardboard and polyfilla"at the behest of his wife.. A most endearing observation.

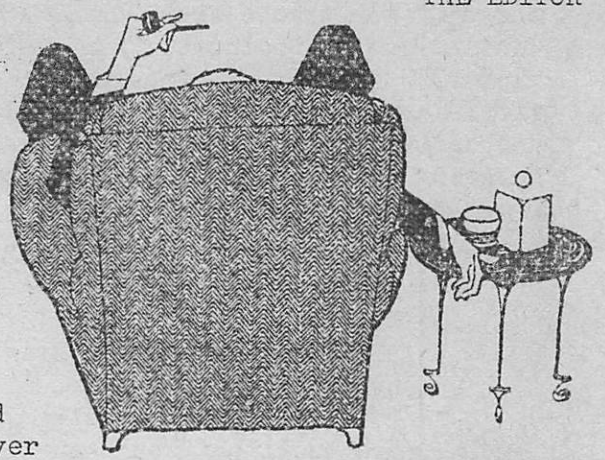
NOW TURN UPSIDE DOWN TO READ THE ANSWERS TO THE CHRISTMAS QUIZ !

1. You don't really need us to name the 12 now that you have looked; We hope nobody quibbles about it being the No. 1 Christmas album - if only in seniority;
2. JINGLE BELLS: SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN: MELE KALIKIMAKA.
3. Max Terr's Mixed Chorus: Ken Darby Singers: Jud Conlon's Rhythmaires.
4. I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.
5. Carole Richards: SILVER BELLS.
6. Dolores Short of the Dessie Scott Childrens' Home.
7. GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN - Denham Choral Society.
8. THOU DESCENDEDTH FROM THE STARS.
9. I WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS: Warner WM 8136
10. Sonny Burke
11. Dave Bowie; THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY
12. CREMO CIGARS: CHESTERFIELD CIGARETTES: PHILO: KRAFT MUSIC HALL: GENERAL ELECTRIC.
13. SHELL OIL 1961. "I'm going well, I'm going Shell, I'm going well &c." (A song card of this was issued)
14. ADESTE FIDELIS.
15. SILENT NIGHT (Larry's suggestion was that the royalties went to various charities - which they did.)
16. Mills Brothers, Boswell Sisters, Burns & Allen, The Street Singer (Arthur Tracy) DonaldNovis, Kate Smith;bands of Cab Calloway/Vincent Lopez

ERRATA: FOOT OF PREVIOUS PAGE - IT IS, OF COURSE, T. S. ELIOT, not T.E.

With
THE EDITOR

KEEPING track



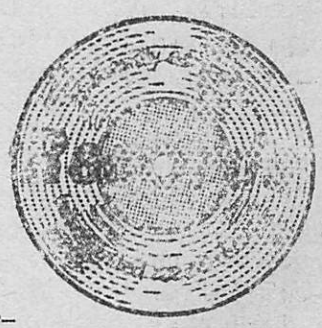
We frequently deal with records here that are difficult - and expensive - to obtain. We are loth to do this but feel it is essential to record if only for posterity just what is being issued of Bing on records, both here at home and in other parts of the world. We have never been more loth, however, than we are in recording receipt of the US READERS DIGEST (second) set entitled BING SINGS AGAIN, described on the as-usual beautifully packaged collection as, fittingly, COLLECTOR'S EDITION. It comprises 8 LPs plus a fine CHRISTMAS WITH BING bonus album, i.e. it contains no less than 9 LPs. The price is not high for the value offered (and discounting the usual and inevitable horde of duplications!) being around £14.00 plus the postage cost of whichever method is used. Airmail, for instance, costs about £7.50 - say around £22/£23. BUT, READERS DIGEST do not mail overseas and it will be necessary for you to have a confact in the States to get the set even at this price. Surface mailing would be about half airmail - and take not less than 4 months!

As for the records - well, we must fall back on the somewhat devalued 'fabulous'. Bing remarked to Alan Dell in his last recording "I get songs from all over!" And this is precisely what READERS DIGEST have done. Apart from drawing on the nigh-bottomless well of MCA(Bruns-Decca as was) they have also pulled out some plums from Capitol (Country Hits), RCA (Fancy Meeting You Here/Travellin' Two-Beat), Warner (now it seems owned by Capitol also) and, oh, BING WITH A BEAT (RCA) and, heavily, on radio items. These radio tracks, we note, are 'by courtesy of CMI Records, A Concept Group Co - whoever THEY are. It seems as if they 'own' the rights to a large wad of Crosby radio material.

Possibly rubbing salt &c. to say this is a lovely package and because of pressure on space we'll refrain from listing the 103 titles (including the Christmas 'bonus') but consider Record No 3, for example, comprising:

Sweetheart of Sigma Chi (Bruns)
Down Among The Sheltering Palms(RCA)
I Wonder What's Become of Sally(Bruns)
What'll I Do? (radio)
Shine on Harvest Moon (with Rosie)(radio)
Blue Skies (Bruns)
Remember? (radio)
That Old Gang of Mine (radio)
I'm Waiting for Ships (Bruns)
Who's Sorry Now? (Bruns)
All By Myself (Bruns)
Till We Meet Again (radio)

as an illustration of the darting-about that has gone on! It will assuage the 'salt in the wound' syndrome to some extent if we point out that there are, as intimated above, massive duplications, e.g. tracks most of us have had for aeons. Even so, it is rather incomprehensible why the UK READERS DIGEST organisation isn't making the issue here. That there is a healthier demand for Crosby records in Britain (and Europe) is plain, tho' that demand is probably offset by the larger population on which to draw. It IS good to hear the radio items in first-class quality.....



But now we turn to items that are readily and happily available though no doubt most members will have most of them. WHITE CHRISTMAS (MCA-Bruns) makes its annual appearance; Music for Pleasure again offer CHRISTMAS IS A'COMING and this really is an excellent 12-track album rivalling WHITE CHRISTMAS (MFP50314)

Music for Pleasure have also issued CHRISTMAS WITH THE STARS, containing three of the tracks from CHRISTMAS IS A'COMING, e.g. The First Noel, Santa Claus is Coming to Town and Rudolph the R.N.R. (MFP50484) Both these MFP records are freely available, especially in Woolworths - tho if you have the first (CHRISTMAS IS A'COMING) the second is hardly attractive unless the nine Non-Bing items appeal to you, Snag with Yuletide records is that one seldom wants to hear them except between December and January!

MIKE SLIPMAN, LEGEND (MUSIC) 153 Francklyn Gardens, Edgware, Midd'x tells us he still has stocks of BING'S MAGIC and BING'S PARTY available at £4.50 plus P & P (65p) BUT, post-free if BOTH are bought together. If you've neglected to get these so far you shouldn't hesitate for both are excellent albums and despite being radio material are excellent sound-quality.
Mike has plenty of other rarer LPs that we talk about in KEEPING TRACK - perhaps the main source for us now. Drop him a line with a SAE for his lists. You may get something you had overlooked.

We regret KEEPING TRACK may be somewhat incomplete this time and will endeavour to regularise the situation next time.

IN A HURRY WE OMITTED THE USUAL 'SUBS DUE' REMINDER AT THE FRONT OF THIS ISSUE (not entirely the Christmas spirit!) so here it is: A "X" here indicates your subscription is due. Please treat seriously if you want to go on perpetuating the memory of the imperishable Bing....the annual subscription, by the way, is kept artificially low by other-means subsidey. [ ]

READY NOW! READY NOW!! READY NOW !!! READY NOW ! READY NOW !!

Enclosed with this issue is AN ORDER FORM for the hard-back version of the Bing Crosby discography AND the A to Z of Bing Crosby. PLEASE NOTE THIS IS OBTAINED FROM JOHN JOYCE, address as per order form and NOT Reg Bristo! The day is coming when such publications will no longer be possible so our advice is, if-you can run to it, GET TWO copies at the price given (£3.50) This is not sales-talk but common sense - and we don't know how many copies have been printed! MOST IMPORTANT: American/Canadian members must remit NINE DOLLARS for their copies; elsewhere members must work out their equivalent of £4.00 sterling when ordering. There is no profit at a price of £3.50 per copy and losses will certainly be incurred if postage is ignored or under-estimated. Please take care!

ALSO AVAILABLE! And this time from Reg Bristo: PHILCO RADIO TIME

Lionel Pairpoint, with his incredible directory of no less than THREE seasons of Philco Radio Time Bing shows - 108 programmes are dealt with in great detail - joins the ranks of the distinguished Crosby researchers. Fred Reynolds, Geoff. Milne, the late Les Phythian, Bob Roberts, Ralph Harding, John Bassett, Bert Bishop, Colin Pugh and others, And now LIONEL PAIRPOINT! Apart from minute details of all the shows, Lionel has prov[illegible] highly diverting NOTES for virtually all the programmes dealt with. It makes for [illegible]ing, even fascinating, reading apart from being a most valuable directory of reference. The directory runs to 88 packed pages.
It is recognised this may be a 'specialist' publication and therefore, there has been only a limited printing, based on the sales of Colin Pugh's diligent study of Alternate 'Takes' issued. It will be essential, therefore, to obtain your copy immediately if you are one who is studying and analysing ALL of Bing's many facets. Once again, only the costs are paid for - labour is all for 'love'! Thus, the three indexes (indices if you must) alone are worth the price of £2.50 post paid.

BING ON THE BOX

With a distinct paucity of Crosby films on television, and the occasional record turning up on radio, the big event had to be the unexpected BBC radio tribute to Bing lasting 2-hours on October 11th. The viewing-box has been sadly Bing-less and we can only hope that the Christmas season will put Bing in his rightful place. And the immediate thought was why wasn't the Tribute Show shewn on television and thus reach a much wider audience?

But, it took place and there is cause for satisfaction there. It is also most satisfactory that ICC members formed the bulk of the studio audience. We must explain how this came about: HARRY NOLAN, of Bexhill-on-Sea got urgently in touch with your Secretary about nine days before the broadcast was due to take place with not only news of the planned programme but also that he was in a position to get the bulk of the tickets! All that was necessary was for yours tfuly to get members interested to write to Harry asking for the necessary tickets. So the process had to be that I had to contact members, they had to contact Harry, and then receive their tickets by mail. And knowing what the mail is today (with apologies to our GPO members) there was little, precious little, time.

An intense six hours followed Harry's communication: firstly, I telephoned as many members as possible whom I knew could start a 'chain-reaction' by contacting other members. They were told to ring Harry first, and follow up with a letter. I should apologise here to members who would have loved to have been at the BBC's Maida Vale studios for this momentous programme but I felt it had to be confined to members within a reasonable distance of London. There was no time to issue a general circular (though in fact around 20 letters were posted in the six hours mentioned!) But the really inhibiting factor was that Harry had told me that the audience could only number around 130 people. As this number could easily be reached in the environs of London (tho' happily people on the South coast did get there) it seemed useless to go further afield, especially as there was the prospect that by the time distant members knew about it all the tickets would be gone. Harry Nolan subsequently wrote to me and said, effectively, 'I don't know how you did it - but it WORKED!'
To the programme itself: Alan Dell, who conducted Bing's last recorded interview; Gordon Rose who conducted the orchestra on that same occasion, Ted Rogers who toured with Bing in his (Bing's) two concert tours of Britain together with a bevy of singers, male and female, were present.

AND DAME VERA LYNN WAS PRESENT, TOO, TO UNVEIL
THE PLAQUE COMMEMORATING BING'S LAST PROFESSIONAL
ENGAGEMENT AT THE BBC. AND CHARMINGLY AND MOST
SINCERELY DID VERA PERFORM THIS MOVING CEREMONY.

We might point out that the BBC received no prompting from us in their fine gesture - unlike the management of the London Palladium, for instance.

Many of the members who were in the studio have written glowingly of the efforts of the artists in the programme, and most certainly of their delight at having had a word with the so-friendly Dame Vera who it seems, was as usual graciousness itself. Vera readily signed song-sheets that were provided by the BBC for the concluding singalong---and as a matter of interest, I found this perhaps the most moving part of the show.
There was some criticism of the programme, it must be said, but I feel that a distinction MUST be drawn between a programme BY Bing - and a TRIBUTE to Bing. There are those who get uneasy, uncomfortable, at some of Bing's hallowed songs being performed by lesser artists, but the aforementioned distinction must be borne in mind. The programme was put over with respect and sincerity by all concerned.

And Alan Dell was able to pull a lovely surprise out of the hat for us by announcing that the BBC were to issue an album of Bing's last interview/

broadcast - made, incidentally, in the same studio from whence came the tribute programme. We were hoping that this would be to hand to complement this report but so far no luck. It is understood the record will also contain excerpts from Parkinson TV shows. We are intrigued at this issue, bearing in mind Bing's final broadcast, the subject of the record, was virtually the FEELS GOOD, FEELS RIGHT album issued by Decca shortly before that fateful bfoadcast. One feels some sort of arrangement must be necessary between the BBC and MCA. We must wait and see. My warmest thanks to all the members who wrote delightedly to tell me of their presence at the broadcast.

AND WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF THANKS, THEY GO TO THOSE CONTRIBUTORS WHO DID COME THROUGH IN TIME FOR THIS ISSUE, WITH A SPECIAL WORD FOR THE INVENTIVENESS AND ASSISTANCE OF JOHN MARSHALL, OF TEDDINGTON, MIDD'X.

John Marshall is quite a chap...he writes songs. Good songs, too - but such are the mysteries of song-publishing, gets no luck. He writes soundly constructed songs with good lyrics in direct contravention to the one-line-repeat-ad-nauseum songs that are bashed out daily on the radio and sound largely like a solo on a pneumatic drill with accompaniment by a cement-mixer and the 'vocals' yelped out by a bunch of Simeons. Yet John gets nowhere. But wait. He is GETTING somewhere for he intends, off his own bat, to make and issue and EP record of four of his songs. One is dedicated to 'The Circle', another to Bing's life story, a third to Johnny Jones of Ireland (tho' born in Wales!) and a fourth to be decided as I write. John Marshall lives at 39, Kings Rd., Teddington, Midd'x and intends to keep the price of his privately-produced EP to £1.50. I give you my word you will like his songs, especially with their personal content. Shall we help John recover his outlay - and get a very nice record at the same time? I think we should.

We have the feeling that The Circle might have sponsored or even underwritten this EP venture of John Marshall's; but, he has gone ahead independently, and the least we can do - in view of the content of the record - is to urge members to support him with what is a modest charge for a most interesting and enterprising effort.

Many members have drawn our attention to a six-part series written by a MRS. CHRISTINE LAUDER, a housewife, in THE PEOPLE'S FRIEND, a woman's weekly magazine with distinct religious overtones. They further ask if Mrs. Lauder is a member of The Circle. No, she is not - but obviously should be. Despite starting off the series by maintaining that the first time she heard Bing sing on a gramophone record was on August 7, 1930 (her birthday) and it was WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT which Bing first recorded on 23.11.31, the series went on to be most interesting. And it included a whole series of Bing pictures which are obviously rare and many of them new to us. Which is saying something - and we hope we didn't sound patronising about the record! We will endeavour to trace Christine....

MR. G. GRAY of Thornaby, Cleveland sent us a photograph his daughter took in Holland - of the inevitable flower-beds. BUT, the board announcing BING CROSBY appears to be on a plot of DAFFODILS, not the usual tulips. Most interesting....

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? YOUNG TWERP! GOOD GRIEF! Take any of these headings which suits you, but we saw this paragraph in a newspaper (thanks to John Coomes of Maidenhead): "..Bing's son Harry, 21, doesn't like being compared with his famous father. 'My father WAS JUST A CROONER. I WANT TO BE A GREAT ACTOR,' said Harry who has just starred in a horror film called Friday the 13th."

Now, (the capitals by the way are your Editor's) the newspaper did comment:

"HARRY, I WOULDN'T DISPARAGE YOU DAD UNTIL YOU'VE DONE WHAT HE ID BACK IN 1944 - WON AN OSCAR FOR HIS ACTING IN THE FILM 'GOING MY WAY'.....

But, can ANYONE disparage Bing, leave alone his own son? Surely Bing's recording breaking, history-making, career on radio, films and records (even if we leave out TV) stands as one of the greatest careers ever? Anyone who disparages that is - we'll peel no eggs - a nincompoop beyond compare. Who ever he might be....

PHIL CLARKE, 69 Walden Rd., Stamshaw, Portsmouth: ANYBODY WISHING TO JOIN THE ICC VIDEO EXCHANGE please write to me c/O SOUTHERN BING CROSBY TRIBUTE CLUB as shewn, enclosing SAE for further details. With the proliferation of video-records this is likely to become a big feature of Crosbyana.

WE SEND OUR SPECIAL GREETINGS AT THIS TIME TO KEN TWISS who is working so hard and not, we might add, getting the support from Bing's birthplace he is entitled to expect. I was astonished to learn from Ken that the Society has more UK members than in the entire State of Washington. To illustrate further what Ken is up against I quote from a recent letter:

> "Father Dussault has had quite a time to get anyone of the family to be at the dedication of the statue (at Gonzaga). He told me that Bob has promised to be there in April along with a couple of the original Bob-Cats...Father Dussault is hoping that Harry III will be there to unveil the statue...."

Ken asks me to say he really appreciates the support he has had from the Uk, and that is good. The address again is: THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PO Box 8013, Tacoma, Washington 98408, USA. You will remember that one of the principal aims of the Society is to acquire Bing's birthplace in Tacoma as a permanent home for its activities. But - a familiar story - a lot of money is needed. Membership of the Society (which we must, in all honesty add doesn't amount too much to UK members EXCEPT in its aims) is ten dollars a year, bringing its Newsletter and other literature. (10 dollars equals about £4.20p...

Add JOHN BASSETT, 15 Oast Way, Pochford, Essex to those GETTING INVOLVED - John holds regular meetings at hishome where the usual Crosbyana activities abound. Write to John enclosing SAE if interested in attending.

We must ask you to refer back to Page 48 where, extolling the virtues of JOHN MARSHALL, we even so omitted the most salient fact! Not only does John write these songs, HE SINGS THEM AS WELL - in a most pleasant, easy-on-the-ear style....you have his address for the record.

And whilst recanting, we think our 'proof reader' has done a better job this time; but we must point out that it is ALF FARROW - not Al...and that Bing said "Nodded!" Not 'Noddied'.... And remember, if you want to hear, if only in your mind's ear, 108 Philco shows in great detail , get the Philco Radio Time Directory. Among other things, you will discover, or perhaps re-discover, that Bing's association with Peggy Lee was considerable - certainly rivalling that of any other female vocaliste. It may come as a surprise to a lot of members...you will find too, a lot of songs you have got out of nowhere falling into place - as 'Philco' songs...and it is explained, also, how radio was inevitably falling off in popularity before the advance of the monster - TELEVISION!

THE VOICE OF CHRISTMAS

One of the hallmarks of Bing Crosby's recording career was his willingness, even his eagerness, to record every type of song. Under the guidance of Jack Kapp Bing began recording the widest variety of songs imaginable.

'Patriotic, blues, rhythm, country and western, love songs, recitations, choirs, groups. I don't know what...I haven't sung. Accordions, I even made a record with an accordion player. Strauss...I sang all those songs. I can't say they all did well, But I sang them. All I do is, I just do the same old thing every time except its a different song each time.'

In that comment Bing made in 1975 he was once again playing down his versatility. But the fact remains that there has never been a singer who has been better able to handle so many different songs and styles of music.

Of all the many types of songs Bing recorded he seemed to have a special affinity for Christmas songs. His first Christmas recording was made on September 19, 1928 when Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra recorded SILENT NIGHT and CHRISTMAS MELODIES. After joining Decca records Bing began to record every type of Christmas song written. From sentimental to novelty. From religious to Hawaiian. Bing's annual Christmas radio and television shows became a traditional part of the holiday season.

Bing's recording of SILENT NIGHT (on Decca) is not only the most beautiful version of that carol, but also one of the biggest selling records in the history of the record industry. All of Bing's royalties from SILENT NIGHT have gone to charities. This is another indication of Bing's quiet but consistently charitable nature. But there is one Christmas song above all others with which Bing is identified.

In 1942 Bing and Fred Astaire starred in the film HOLIDAY INN. As the title indicates, the plot was built around the various holidays during the year. The film's score was written by Irving Berlin, one of Bing's favourite song writers. A couple of Berlin's earlier songs were used but most of the songs were written especially for the film. On Friday May 29, 1942 Bing recorded three of the film's songs for Decca. One of those songs was WHITE CHRISTMAS. John Scott Trotter conducted the orchestra and the Ken Darby Singers provided the vocal accompaniment for Bing. Ken Darby remembers that 'when we first recorded WHITE CHRISTMAS all who participated recognised a potential smash hit of endless duration.'

And what a hit it became. From the day the record was released it captivated the public. Its popularity spread throughout the world as American GI's overseas took the song to heart just as the folks back home did. Year after year WHITE CHRISTMAS has returned each December to become as much a part of the season as Santa Claus and Christmas trees.

Bing's record of WHITE CHRISTMAS is the biggest selling record in history with sales of over 30 million copies. Many major recording artists haven't sold that many copies of all their recordings combined. Bing did it with just one record. WHITE CHRISTMAS sold so well and so consistently that it became necessary to rerecord the song in 1947. According to Ken Darby: "When the first impression had sold out seven times over and the die-stamp had become slightly worn from sheer overuse..One day..I got a call from John Scott and Jack Kapp. They wondered if I could gather together the same team we had used on the original recording. I said they were all still in the business singing better than ever..and they set a date for a repeat performance in the old Decca studios in Melrose..We sang the same arrangement, John Scott Trotter conducted the same arrangement and used almost the same men.'

Bing recorded the song again in 1954 for the soundtrack album from the film WHITE CHRISTMAS and a radio broadcast version from Bing's 1955 Christmas radio programme was also issued.

Truly is Bing's the Voice of Christmas!

(With grateful acknowledgements to Larry Zwisohn's fine book A LIFETIME OF MUSIC

HAPPY CHRISTMAS! And if you MUST drink and drive - STICK TO LEMONADE...

LAST-MINUTE ADIENDUM: We were totally aghast to discover on printing this issue that despite what we thought was more care being exercised, a whole series of irritating errors had crept in, mainly typographical. It will be necessary, therefore, to keep this by you when reading the contents:

Page 5 - PRINCIPAL CONTENTS: KEEPING TRACK delete Bert Bishop.
Page 7 - In the paragraph at the bottom TAPED GREETINGS read "the Bing Crosby Historical Society.."
Page 11 - KIKUYU not KIKYUYU
Page 12 - 4 lines from bottom read "sociable"
Page 13 - 3 lines from bottom read "Well, there we are...."
Page 21 - Line two, "heirs" not "hairs"
Page 26 - Last word, 2nd paragraph is "creeds", not "freeds"
Page 33- ALF Farrow, not AL.
Page 35: Question 12 "our ITV" not "out ITV"
Page 41 - MOST IMPORTANT in John Bignells article, 10 lines from the bottom read "1938-1942" not "1938-32"
Page 42 - Para 5 "BUT" not "BYT"
5 lines from bottom of page "remain neutral"
Page 43 - Lyrics: Charms, not Chamrs.
Page 44 - The piece about Lionel Pairpoints PHILCO directory overtaken by events as the Directory IS NOW AVAILABLE (see later in magazine)
Page 49 - Top line should read "What he did...."

THIS EXTRA INFORMATION DOES AFFORD US THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY THAT THE BBC'S ALBUM'THE FINAL CHAPER' WAS FIRST SEEN AND OBTAINED ON NOV. 18. A SURPRISE INCLUSION IS THE ANNE SHELTON DUET REFERRED TO ON PAGE 16 OF THIS ISSUE. WE PAID £4.69p for the record. MORE IN NEXT ISSUE OF "BING" NO. IS REB398 JUST FOR NOW WE CAN SAY THE BBC HAS PRODUCED A SPLENDID, FITTING & GRACIOUS ALBUM: A SPLENDID, GRACIOUS, HEART-WARMING TRIBUTE TO BING.

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

Secretary: REG BRISTO

7 GREENMEADOW CLOSE · CWMBRAN · GWENT · NP4 3NR

'BING'

The ICC's Official Quarterly Magazine

Dear Ken,

Thanks for letter - new address logged - and I trust you are both settling down there okay. You certainly seemed well-wired for sound! I never trusted removal men with my records in my various moves! Used to take them by car, with someone in the back holding them - several journeys! Trust you have had confirmed, visually and orally, the old axiom about Nottingham girls being pretty. Nearly as pretty as Yorkshire lasses!

I think Lionel has done a great job with the Philco - GEC will be resumed in the next BING.

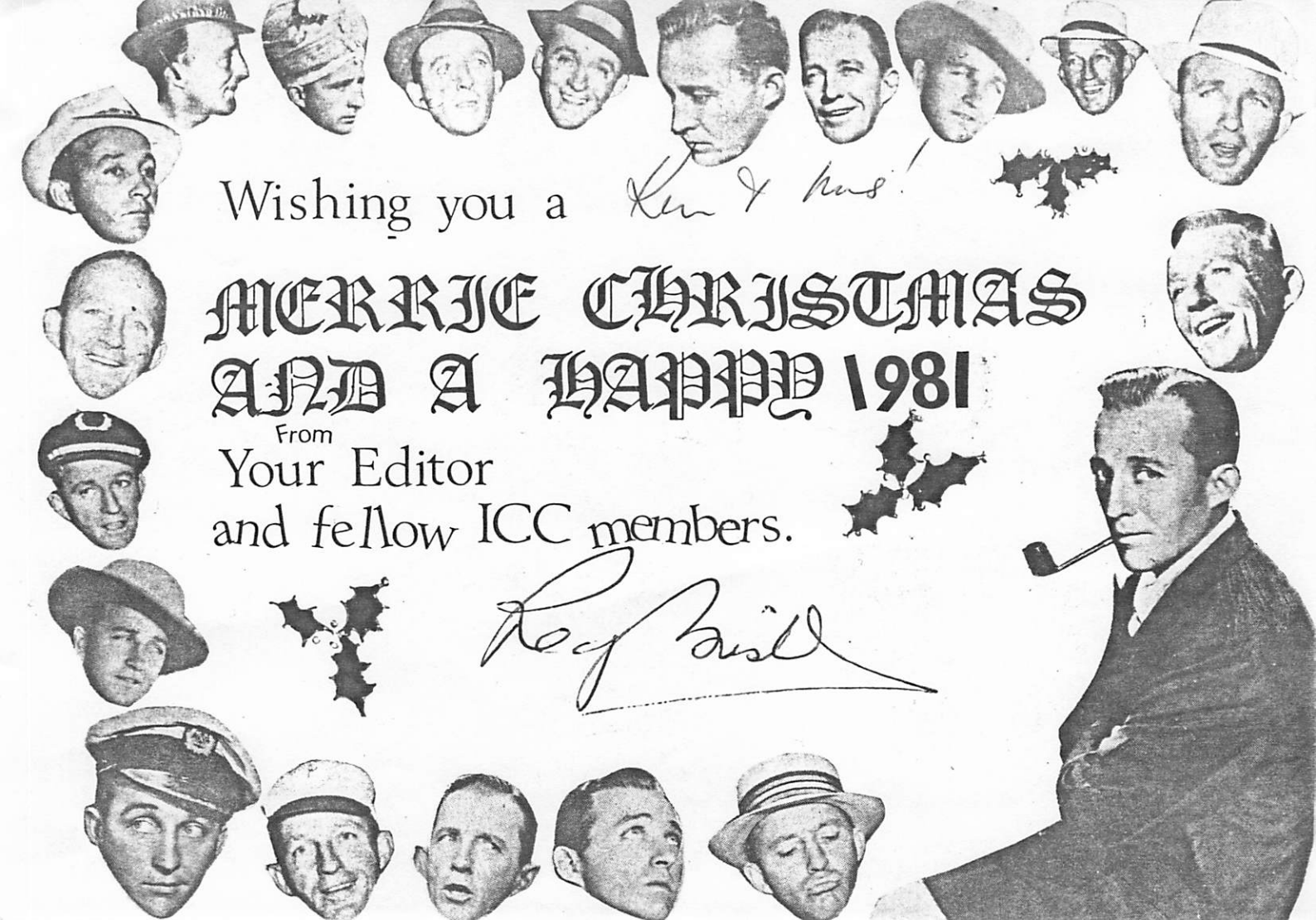
I'm walking as well as I ever will now - but have been bugged by the 'flu - or something! Hope things go well for you - you'll have a bit further to travel in September.

All the best to both,

24.1.81

PS. Who IS Cliff Richard?

You chose well with Birmingham!


Wishing you a
MERRIE CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY 1981
From
Your Editor
and fellow ICC members.